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[THE SHOT THROUGH THE DOOR.]

MAN AND HIS IDOL.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MASTER OF REDRUTH HOUSE.
A happy gentleman in birth and lineaments
By you unhappied and disfigured clean.

Shakespeare.

KINGSTON MEREDITH strode over the prostrate body of the ruffian whom he had struck down in the moment of his brutal attack on the Lady Blanche.

He saw her ladyship reel and totter at the sight of him, and in spite of the past, he instinctively rushed forward to save her from falling.

Thus once more his arms were about the woman whom he loved better than anything else in this world, the woman, who a few hours before he had tried to persuade himself he hated with a lifelong hatred.

The touch of the light form that sank insensible upon his bosom thrilled him with a feeling which he thought had become only a memory to him. His heart, so torpid of late, bounded fiercely, his lips quivered, a mist obscured his eyes.

It was a moment of intense pleasure, quivering on the verge of pain.

While it lasted—while he stood hesitating what step to take—the door of the room at the end of the corridor from which Blanche had come was cautiously opened, and the faithful Manton, finding all quiet, slipped out, and stealing along the corridor, came upon the group—Meredith supporting her mistress and Steve Broad lying apparently dead at her feet.

The idea of some violent outrage filled her mind. She did not know what had happened, but she jumped to the conclusion that there had been murder and a forcible attempt to carry off her mistress.

This was confirmed when on drawing near she recognized the features of the man whom she had betrayed in the park. He was, she knew, her mistress's secret lover, and the instantaneous conclusion of her mind was that, driven to desperation, he had been guilty of the desperate act which had so alarmed them.

Indignant at such conduct, she attacked him fiercely. "Oh, what are you doing?" she cried, in the utmost

excitement. "What dreadful things are you doing?" He had not heard her as she stole upon him, and now turned surprised and indignant. He had no difficulty in recognizing the woman who had betrayed him in the park.

"You here!" he said, bitterly.

"Yes, sir, and it's well for my lady that she's someone to stand by her in this awful trouble. How wicked, how sinful it is of you to come here in the dead of the night with all this mob, frightening my lady out of her wits. You durst not have done it if my lord had been here!"

"You mistake, woman, utterly mistake," interposed the young man.

"Oh, I daresay. Pretty mistake, no doubt, but you shan't have your wicked way if I can help it. You shan't carry her off against her will while I've a breath in my body."

She threw herself upon the inanimate form of the Lady Blanche, and stretching her arms about her, would have caught her to her bosom.

The young man resisted.

"Manton," he said, "you were my good friend once. Don't deceive me. Tell me, for God's sake, if what you've said is true. Would it be against her will?"

Poor Manton had no wish to deceive, but she was scared, terrified at what had happened. She attributed it all to Meredith. She feared the consequences of a passion which could go to such desperate lengths, and feeling it her duty to offer what weak opposition she could to the rising storm, she reconciled it to her conscience to sacrifice the truth.

"It would," was her answer.

"You have deceived me once, Manton—you are deceiving me now," cried the young man in his anguish.

"No."

"You think I will believe that your lady has forgotten—has grown indifferent to me?"

"She said so—you heard her say so," returned Manton.

"I did; but I still hoped—Manton, you know who was by when she uttered those words. The earl was there, and the hateful lord who claimed her hand. She might have been terrified. Fear might have prompted her to speak. But you are with her day

and night; you know her secrets; you can read her heart. Tell me, then, for Heaven's sake, tell me—did she speak the truth?"

"She did."

A deep groan burst from the lips of the agonized man.

He said no more. He yielded up the prostrate form which he loved with such passionate intensity; and casting one long desperate glance at the exquisite face which was his destiny, he strode from the spot.

Manton, terrified at the effect of her false words, was half-inclined to call him back. Then she thought of the alarm this wild unrestrained passion of his had already occasioned, for she did not question but that he was the leader of the lawless intruders at Redruth House, and consoled herself with the thought that she had acted for the best.

"My lady can never be his," she thought, as she bent tenderly over her young mistress. "The earl wouldn't think of it, and the sooner he goes away, and she gets over all thoughts of him, the better."

You will see that Manton had never loved. She might have yielded to passing gusts of affection which had for the moment stirred the placid surface of her heart; but of any true absorbing passion she had no experience, or she would not have talked of "getting over it," as if it was but a kind of epidemic which might be outgrown. She would have known that under its influence man's very nature changes, as in the throes of earthquakes, rivers are diverted and flow in fresh channels.

Kingston Meredith walked down the great staircase of Redruth House, his face rigid, his hands pressed upon his heart. Not even on the night when the countess confronted him in that very house had he felt more utterly crushed and desolate.

He had come there in the vague hope of seeing the Lady Blanche, and of receiving from her own lips a confirmation of his doubts or his despair. But fate was adverse, and even the thought that he had arrived at a critical moment in which he had been able to save her from the brutality of a ruffian, brought him no comfort.

If her love had ceased, all for which he cared on earth was at an end.

Overwhelmed with this feeling, he descended the

stairs with no settled purpose, when he was startled by the sounds of mad riot from the lower part of the house. Voices in loud, boisterous chorus broke on his ears. Cries and shouts and loud talking arrested his attention, as it had when he had first entered the house, only the tumult was greatly exaggerated. The rioters were drawing nearer.

While he listened, in fact, they came rushing, one after another in drunken confusion, up into the hall. The earl's wine had excited them to madness. In the midst of his yelling, shouting, singing, screaming adherents, Daniel Kingston appeared calm and erect. Meredith singled him out at once as the ringleader. He caught a glimpse at the man's pale wasted face, fiercely glowing eyes, and nervously twitching figure, and formed his opinion at once.

"This is a madman," he said to himself; and the bare idea that the Lady Blanche might be exposed to the tender mercies of a drunken mob, led by a dangerous maniac, caused an instant revulsion of feeling in his mind.

"I cannot hate her," he cried, "and I cannot desert her in this peril."

Inspired with this feeling, he unconsciously assumed a more manly bearing, and as the eyes of the crowd fell upon him for the first time, they stared in amazement, and there was a momentary silence.

The fierce eyes of Daniel Kingston glowed yet more fiercely as he demanded the name of the intruder.

"You know, I suppose," he added, "who this place belongs to?"

"Yes; the Earl of St. Omer," replied the young man, quietly.

"Good! I am the earl."

"You?"

Meredith could not restrain a smile.

"Yes, I, and I must request your name, or that you will leave this house!"

"Bravo! Hurrah!" hiccapped the drunken crowd.

"Oh! you shall know my name in good time," said Meredith.

"Shall? I do know it!" shouted Kingston, a sudden idea taking possession of his excited brain, "you are the countess's son—the disgrace to the name of St. Omer. I know you now!"

"Indeed! you are mistaken!" protested the young man.

"Oh, we know the value of your word, sir!" cried the new earl. "Tis he, gentlemen," he added, turning to the mob, "who else should it be? Who else would come sneaking to Redruth House at such a time? He's no right here! He's not a St. Omer! He's no right to lay a finger on a thing in this house! I am the true earl!"

"Turn him out!" cried a stentorian voice.

Meredith protested in vain.

"Duck him in the fish-pond—that's the fun!" shouted the hag of the white banner.

"Out with the lot of 'em, my lord!" hiccapped a tipsy cobbler.

"Ay, ay, down with him! Out with the rat!"

So they shouted.

Their voices loud and shrill, rising one above the other, filled the hall, and drowned the protestations of the man so naturally mistaken for Mark Allardyce. Of Mark the people had heard much, and in all they had heard there was but little to his advantage. He had scarcely been seen at Redruth House, some incident of a poor girl decoyed away from Galescombe, to her ruin, on his first visit, having greatly incensed the neighbourhood. To this story the shrill-voiced Mother Jumper, who had led the procession, contrived to make allusion.

"Where's Nick Graddon's Bet!" was all she screamed.

"Ay, shame on him! Shame on him!" burst out a chorus of voices.

"To the fish-pond!"

"To the horse-pond!"

"Duck him!"

"Toss him!"

"Tar and feather him!"

Meredith's position became perilous. He felt that, yet he did not fear. As the shouts of the mob rent the air, it became impossible for him to offer any explanation; but he stood calm, collected, defiant.

Life had not so many charms for him he felt that he need shrink from death. His face expressed this; but the bearing and manner which would have served his purpose under ordinary circumstance only hurt his cause now. The drunken, infuriated mob mistook his coolness for bravado, and the absence of fear for callous indifference to the consequence of his dastardly acts.

So refusing to hear a word of explanation or defence, urged on by their own blind passions, rendered cruel and relentless by intoxication, they closed round the unfortunate man, seized him, dragged him down the stairs upon which he had remained, and, clutched at with many hands, he was hurried, hustled and driven through the hall, which rang with bestial oaths and execrations.

It was morning now, and the grey light streamed in

at the open door of the hall. In another hour the sun would rise, and Meredith, as they bore him on, could hear at every partial lull of the clamorous mob, that the birds were singing in the park, as birds only sing in the early dawn.

Strange it is how, in moments of peril, the mind seizes on some insignificant fact, and realizes it with painful intensity. So long as he lived, the memory of that terrible morning always came back on him fresh with the singing of the birds.

Every instant his peril increased.

The drunken mob was in a mood for administering justice. It had helped to re-install a crushed, ill-used man in his rights, and now it desired nothing better than to avenge itself on the seducer of the village beauty, known among them as Dick Graddon's Bet.

Seeing their fierce determination, Meredith made one violent effort to address, and so to undeceive them. As they reached the hall door he drew back, and trying to free one arm from the grip of Mother Jumper, shouted at the top of his voice.

"Will you not hear me?" he demanded.

"No! no! No lies!" screamed the horrible woman.

"No lies! No lies!" reiterated the mob, apparently fearful of their own power of resisting the eloquence of a desperate man.

"Down with his head! up with his legs!"

So the cry went.

And in an instant it was acted upon, and Meredith found himself overborne in the scuffle, tripped up, and his legs seized by half-a-dozen tipsy wretches, while the rest made prisoner of his head and shoulders.

"Run him to the horse-pond!" cried Mother Jumper, giving force to her advice by nearly tearing his right arm off.

They had crossed the hall, the foremost of the mob were already at the open door, and the brutal concourse was about to emerge into the park, when the attention of the ringleaders was suddenly arrested by a sight which always produces a tremor in the breasts of Englishmen.

A stranger was hastening toward the house, leading a little knot of constables, who, hastily collected, were advancing with their staves drawn, and prepared for violence.

In a second Meredith's legs were dropped; he was, in fact, thrown upon the ground. The cries and curses ceased; the rioters looked at each other scared and silent. Then, as the police came on, the voice of the new earl was heard giving an order, clearly and distinctly.

"Shut the door—bolt and bar it," he said.

The order was obeyed as readily as the shattered condition of the door would permit.

"Do you know what you're about?" cried Meredith, springing to his feet and confronting the earl.

"I do—I am playing the master's part in Redruth House."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SHOT THROUGH THE DOOR.

You likewise, our late guests, if so you will
Follow us: who know but we may build some plan
Four-square to opposition? *Templeton.*

BAFFLED by the prompt orders of the new earl, the constables expressed their resentment by battering at the door with their staves.

"In the Queen's name!" cried the foremost of them,

"Open—in the Queen's name!"

Kingston smiled and his eyes glowed with the dangerous light which had so often irradiated them of late.

Meredith looked at him with curiosity and uneasiness. The pot-valiant crowd, who, forgetting their late victim, were cowed by even the faint show of constituted authority, stood about him uncertain how to act.

"Praps ee'd better open the door, my lord, after all," suggested one of the foremost curs.

"No!" screamed Mother Jumper. "No! I say."

"Ye'll have to do it in the end," urged the fellow in a craven tone.

"Never!" replied St. Omer. "Haven't I said I would see Redruth House in flames before it should pass into other hands? And I will. I'll fire it! If I can't hold my own by fair means, I'll make a bonfire of it!"

"Well said!" shrieked Mother Jumper.

The constables still thundered at the door. A loud voice could still be heard calling on them to surrender; but Kingston did not move an inch, or stir a muscle. If he had a source of annoyance it was in the altered mien of those friends to whom he had given the run of the cellar, and whose craven hearts were manifestly beginning to fail them.

Meredith saw this, and seizing the opportunity addressed them:

"You hear those sounds!" he cried; "Do you know what they mean? Do you know, cowardly wretches as you are, that you have no right in this place? That

you come here with a man who has no right? That you and he will be arrested and punished for conspiring to destroy Lord St. Omer's property?"

Not a voice interrupted him.

It seemed as if the cowards had grown suddenly sober. But there was no change in the manner of the new earl.

"He lies! He deceives you!" he exclaimed. "What else should St. Omer's rascal son do? Let him once get rid of us and he takes possession. He! You know him! Your young daughters will know him!"

The speech was not without its effect. Meredith saw the tide turning against him, and promptly seized his opportunity.

"It is false," he exclaimed, "I am not the earl's son-in-law. I am no more Mark Allardyce than this fellow is Earl St. Omer."

There was a moment of consternation. In its altered temper the crowd was inclined to believe anything; yet they hesitated to confess the extent of their brutal violence by admitting the truth of what they now heard.

Even the new earl was somewhat struck by the statement he had heard, and more especially by the manner of the speaker.

"If you are not the earl's son-in-law," he asked, "Who are you?"

"My name is Kingston Meredith," was the reply.

If a shell had exploded at the feet of the new earl it could not have caused him to start in greater surprise.

"Kingston! Is that your name?" he said with an awed, subdued tone.

"My Christian name."

"You are a claimant for the earldom, then?"

"For the earldom?"

"You are my rival—yet I never heard of you till this instant."

Kingston Meredith smiled pityingly.

From the first he had regarded the man before him as the victim of a delusion, though his words were calmly uttered, and his manner so earnest and forcible that he hesitated to call him mad. But this remark confirmed his view. That a man should regard him, a perfect stranger, as his rival to the earldom of St. Omer was as clear a proof of mania as any man could desire.

His look perhaps expressed this. His words certainly did, for he replied:

"Your lordship may rest perfectly contented on that ground. Whatever rivals you may have I am not one of them. I do not aspire to an earldom."

"It is false," was the reply. "You are deceiving me."

"Why should I? What am I to you? What are you to me?"

The new earl looked at him earnestly. The face of the young man was open and ingenuous. It was one of those faces which seem too transparent to cover deceit. The man felt this, yet, guarding his answer, he said:

"Why should you, a Kingston, come here at this moment—just as the earl lies in his coffin—if not to look after your rights?"

"I will answer that," was the reply; "but first tell me, what has the fact of my being a Kingston to do with the matter?"

"What!"

"What? It is a simple question, easily answered."

"True: easily enough answered, but you can have no cause to ask it. No, no; you know that well enough."

"No! On my honour!"

"How? You bear my name —"

"Yours?"

"My name, and you are ignorant that the earldom of St. Omer descends to the Kingstons in direct line? I can't, I won't believe it."

But he soon did. When he saw written in the face of the man addressed, wonder, astonishment, incredulity—every feeling that could be aroused by such a disclosure—written plainly as in a book, he no longer doubted.

"Surely," gasped Meredith, "you are mistaken?"

"No; I have proof—proof, I tell you."

"And I—No, no! I'll not believe it. There is no dream so wild as this. That I should ever approach Blanche as an equal! 'Tis folly—mania! I am an idiot to indulge the thought, even for a moment!"

So, partly speaking aloud, partly indulging his own thoughts, Kingston Meredith received the communication. He was angry with himself that he should have listened, much less that he should have been pleased with the words of a deluded man. The case was clear. It was not the first time—not the first by hundreds of thousands—where a sudden public event had produced like effects on the weak brains of the crazed. He thought over in that minute of time the innumerable cases in which harmless maniacs had proclaimed themselves kings, emperors, and even saints and apostles.

And he was about to reply in some pitying but incredulous tone, when Daniel Kingston stopped him.

"Wait!" he said; "you are incredulous now. Wait till you see the proofs."

Meanwhile the attacking party on the outside had ceased in their exertions to gain access by the door, and had withdrawn, with Frank Hildred, in search of some more practicable mode of entrance. The little crowd gathered in the hall, partly awed by their position, partly interested in the singular conversation between the new earl and the man whom they were so nearly submitting to brutal violence, had grown quiet.

Some had sunk into the hall-chairs, and had yielded to drunken stupor. A few had slunk off to the wine-cellar, or to satisfy their curiosity by a ramble through the rooms. The rest, sleepy, tired-out, and undecided how to act, formed a circle, pale, bleary-eyed, yawning, unwholesome.

A moment of irresolution followed Daniel Kingston's last remark.

In the midst of it, there came a sound of pattering feet mingled with cries, that slowly grew on the ear, and turning towards the grand staircase, they perceived the form of Manton, as, only half-dressed, she flew toward them.

"Oh, sir! oh, Mr. Meredith!" she cried, catching sight of his white face among the crowd.

"What new?" he answered proudly.

"My lady—"

"Ah! What of her?"

His tone altered in an instant. His eyes flashed, his cheek glowed, he could hear his heart beat.

"She is gone!"

Without waiting for another word, Meredith bounded across the hall and up the stairs. He came to the spot where he had felled Steve Broad to the ground; the early light showed drops of blood there, but the man's body no longer obstructed the corridor.

Manton, who had preceded him, pointed them out. "He—that man—has recovered, and has carried off my lady," gasped Manton.

It seemed incredible; but a few hurried words explained all. Manton had borne her ladyship to the first bedroom opening out of the corridor, and had laid her upon the couch. Gradually, by the application of stimulants, she had partially, and only partially revived, when the women-folk left her in their terror and curiosity. Some had ventured toward the hall, some had gone up to the bell-tower, and Manton herself had looked out to a window which commanded a view of the park, and had thus seen the police arrive. Her delight at their appearance had detained her at the window longer than she intended. Twice she had gone back to inform Blanche, who was scarcely conscious, of the progress of events, and finding her inclined to sleep, she had retreated again to watch.

At last, coming back to the bedroom, she found, to her terror, that it was deserted!

Another discovery speedily accounted for that phenomenon. The body of Steve Broad no longer obstructed the corridor. It was evident that he had recovered, and burning with vengeance, had made for the chamber of the Lady Blanche.

These facts Kingston Meredith gleaned in a few seconds.

As he did so he hurried into the chamber in question, saw in one glance that it was indeed empty, and was about to retreat with a vague idea of searching the house, when a faint groan caught his ear.

Manton heard it too.

"Ah, the dressing-room!" she exclaimed.

Simultaneously they sprang toward a door on the further side of the bed, leading to an inner apartment. That door was locked.

Meredith threw himself against it impetuously, and as he did so a laugh resounded from the inner room—a low, chuckling laugh.

"Push away, my boy!" cried a man's voice.

"Open the door, instantly," shouted Meredith.

"Open it yourself," returned the voice, that of Steve Broad.

Accompanying his words they could hear the stifled cry of a woman. That sound thrilled through the heart of the young man, and setting his shoulder against the panels of the door, he made a desperate effort to burst them in. But he was feeble with illness, and the door, like those throughout Redruth House, was of solid and substantial timber.

It only shook: it did not yield.

"Try again, man!" shouted the mocking voice; "but make haste, or ye'll be too late!"

Kingston cast a wild, despairing look around him. It was the earl's bedroom in which he found himself. Over the mantel-shelf was an ancient rack of arms—a couple of swords crossed, surmounted by a rifle, and flanked by a brace of horse-pistols.

At his muttered order, Manton reached down one of the latter and presented it to him. Hasty examination showed that it was loaded with ball: it was, in fact, always kept loaded and at half-cock.

"Open this door!" exclaimed Meredith, grasping the pistol, fiercely, "or I will fire through the panel!"

"Oh, fire away, if you like it!" taunted the incredulous ruffian.

"I will! I am in earnest."

"Then I'd better put my lady's back against the door," shouted the other.

There was a scuffle and a scream.

Kingston Meredith stood uncertain how to act.

"Kingston! Kingston!" he heard the voice of Lady Blanche, feebly moaning.

"I am here. Speak!" he cried.

"Help me! Save me!"

He heard these words distinctly, and they drove him well-nigh frantic. Again and again he drove his right shoulder against the door, only to retreat with it bruised and blackened.

Then as he listened he again heard scuffling and struggling within, and smothered sounds, as if from a woman gagged.

"What shall I do? Great God, what shall I do?" he uttered in frantic tones. "Run, Manton—run for aid!"

Manton hurried from the spot.

Meredith threw himself on the ground and listened. As he did so, the voice of Lady Blanche suddenly broke forth, as if in her desperation she had torn a gag from her mouth.

"Kingston!" she cried.

"Yes, darling, yes!"

"You hear me?"

"I do!"

"You are armed?"

"Yes, but—"

He held his breath as the struggle in the room was renewed with fresh sounds of violence.

For an instant those sounds alone caught his ear. Then the voice of Blanche rose in one loud, piercing, agonising word of command.

"Fire!" she cried.

With the act of desperation, Kingston drew back, pointed the pistol at the door, placed his finger round the trigger, and fired.

The ball, shattering and splintering the panel of the door, passed through it into the room.

A low, faint groan smote on the young man's heart.

"God—I have killed her!" was his agonising cry.

CHAPTER XXX.

EMMY'S COPY-BOOK.

Revenge is sweet, especially to women. Byron.

It is necessary that for a moment we interrupt the main course of our narrative to direct attention to one of the tributary streams by which it is fed.

About ten o'clock on the morning that Daniel Kingston and Emmy had started for Redruth House, Mrs. Stott was standing behind the counter of her little shop in Endle's Rents, St. Martin's Lane. She had just smartened herself up for the day, and was engaged in the mechanical operation which filled up the greater part of her time—that of sorting letters.

The face of the good woman was hardly so rosy or radiant as usual, and it was clear that she was in an absent and abstracted mood.

In truth, at that moment her thoughts were of Kingston and Emmy. Their disappearance was the mystery of Endle's Rents. No one could understand it, many refused to credit it, and looked upon her with some degree of suspicion when she related how she had waited until late in the morning, how she then tapped at the door, and receiving no answer, became alarmed, and had the room broken into, and how on looking round she found, not what her fears had pictured—the dead body of father and child—but the absence of all traces of either of them. What rendered the story the more startling was the fact that the wind had blown to the swinging casement, and thus it did not afford a clue to the way the fugitives had retreated. And how the old man and his child could have spirited themselves away from a room, the door of which was locked on the inside, was a question which Mrs. Stott herself did not pretend to answer.

The neighbours thought it "very suspicious."

The police had, late in the day, got scent of it, had come to the house, made an examination, and also thought it "very suspicious." And when, in the fullness of her heart, the post-mistress happened to let out that Daniel Kingston had recently brought home money in large sums, they did not hesitate to pronounce the case "very suspicious indeed."

It was not pleasant for Mrs. Stott. None of us like to be talked about, and looked askance at, and to have our words and actions weighed in the balance of our own neighbourhood, which is our little world. She was a woman of innocent and blameless life, not at all the person to have pickled lodger in her pork-tub, or even to have connived at the disappearance of people carrying off ill-gotten wealth. She invited investigation, affected to despise suspicion, but nevertheless she was annoyed and irritated at the course things had taken. Who would not be?

So it was natural that her second best "front" should cover a puckered brow, as she stood behind her counter

that morning, and that she should have looked up with anything but a gracious smile at a vision of rustling silks and flying ribbons which announced its presence by an atmosphere of perfume.

"Mrs. Stott, I believe?"

The inquirer was the fair but fallen Lotty. She spoke in a low, soft voice, not at all like that in which she talked slang in the Haymarket in bygone days; but Mrs. Stott knew at once that she was not a lady. She had the keenest scent for the sort of delusion which people of Lotty's class tried to keep up. Her sharp black eyes saw through them, her sharp little nose seemed to sniff them out, and when once detected she dealt with them as ruthlessly as with the base coin which she nailed to her counter.

"Stott is my name ma'am," she answered frigidly, at the same time fixing her eyes on the slightly rouged face of the intruder.

"You have a lodger, I believe," said Lotty, seating herself in the solitary chair before the counter, so that her drapery flowed round her in all its amplitude.

Mrs. Stott eyed her with increased sharpness.

"I had a lodger, ma'am," she replied.

"Yes, exactly so: he has left."

"Oh, indeed! You know that ma'am, do you? which it's more than I'd take my Gospel oath on, for 'here to-day and gone to-morrow,' nothing to it. And how he went, and that dear child along of him, p'raps you can tell, for as for me I know no more about 'em than the man in the moon."

"He had his reasons, I believe, for leaving hastily," returned Lotty.

"Was you one of 'em if I may make so bold?" asked Mrs. Stott, who all this time had been reckoning her visitor up.

"No, ma'am, I was not, ma'am," burst out Lotty, rising up at the charge, and forgetting her part as the lady.

"And it's like your impudence—"

"Oh, indeed!" retorted the other woman, "it's like my impudence, is it? And pray ma'am who may you be, with your fine airs and graces and fal-lals, as honest folks like me must lick up the dust of your feet? Which I'm in my own shop, a standing behind my own counter, and with a honest name to my back. Yes, ma'am, though I says it."

The wrath of Lotty burned through the rouge and pearl-powder on her face; but she choked it down. She had come there for a purpose, and she would not be turned from it.

"Now, look here," she said, quietly, "I didn't come here for words. You may be better than me. You may have had better chances and turned them to more account. I won't say. But I'm come here from your lodger, Kingston, and if you'll hear me, I'll say what I've got to say and go."

"Oh, I'm a listenin'" said Mrs. Stott, with a severe shake of her head.

"Well then," said Lotty, "you know that Mr. Kingston, poor and humble as he has been all his life, had great expectations? You know he claimed to be connected with a great family?"

"I've heard him ramble on with such rubbishin' stuff when he'd got a drop too much in his head," was the sharp response.

"What he then said was true," replied Lotty quietly.

Mrs. Stott at once relented.

"Why, he talked about being a lord, and owning a county, and little Emmy being a countess, and I don't know what besides," she said.

"It was all true."

"I won't believe it," retorted the astonished woman flatly.

"I don't think there's a doubt about it," said Lotty; "but if there is it's soon cleared up. Daniel Kingston tells me that in his flight he left behind him certain papers which are necessary to establish his claims. Now, he might have wandered in his mind, you see, but the papers can't wander. If they are what he says, the thing's clear enough; if he's deluded about them, then I've been deceived."

The conversation which opened in this unpromising fashion soon deepened and intensified. Mrs. Stott asked many questions about Kingston and Emmy, and some of these Lotty was able to answer to her satisfaction. One thing she could not explain; that was, how the fugitives escaped from the house, for Kingston had said nothing of the flight over the house-tops. The explanation which Lotty gave of her own position was frank, and it, of course, quite confirmed Mrs. Stott's impressions with regard to her. She had been motherless; had been tempted in the midst of poverty and absolute destitution. Mrs. Stott shook her head at the recital. She half-pitied, but she was a true woman, and could not find it in her heart to forgive the fallen of her own sex.

Of the crusade which Lotty meditated against the St. Omers, and on behalf of Daniel Kingston and his daughter, she quite approved, and after a time permitted Lotty to accompany her up into the garrets which her lodgers had occupied.

They remained as usual. Nothing had been touched. Emmy's embroidery frame stood in its corner with a

stretched canvas, and a rose just commenced upon it. Upon the table, turned over as Daniel had left it, was the little box of valuables, the contents loosely scattered round it.

Lotty hastily glanced at these objects, but her eyes sought out another with more eagerness. It was Emmy Kingston's Bible for which she looked, and which lay open upon a side-table, as the poor girl had turned it down hastily on some recent occasion. Bible-reading was not much in Lotty's way, but she snatched up the book with avidity and turned it from end to end.

It was only to the fly-leaves, however, that she directed her attention; and as her eyes glanced over them an exclamation of intense disappointment escaped her lips. The fly-leaves were blank.

"There's not a word here!" she exclaimed.

"And what did you expect to find?" asked Mrs. Stott.

"Some record of the utmost importance. Something upon which, as he told me last night, the proof of his title to the earldom rested. Can he be deceived? Do you think he is insane?"

"I've thought so at times," was the answer.

"Perhaps he is. Or he may be mad on this point only—same on all others. Such cases are known," said Lotty.

"Oh dear, yes," said the post-mistress, "which I knew a gentleman—a merry old gent he was, as thought himself made of glass. He was all right otherwise; but he was always afraid somebody would go nigh him, or give him a knock and break him. And my old man, Stott, he was a funny fellow, and, says he, when I told him, he says, 'he'd break easy, too,' he says, 'fer he's been cracked a long time.' A funny fellow Stott was, poor dear. He wasn't good for much, neither."

Lotty smiled at this remarkable anecdote, as in duty bound; but she did not enjoy it as she might at another time. Her exasperation against Lord Sandoun was very great, and it was scarcely less against the Lady Blanche, who had, she believed, deceived him away from her. All night she had gloated over the vengeance which the revelation made by Kingston at her friend's house had inspired in her; and now, by the simple fact of the blank pages of the little book she held in her hand, the whole superstructure of that vengeance seemed shattered. Kingston had minutely described the writing it contained, as to its form, length, and so forth, and if that was a creation of his brain only, what could be said of the rest?

"Is it possible that there is another Bible here?" the woman asked suddenly, catching at a natural idea.

"No! I think not," was the answer.

"Was this Emmy's book? Do you know that?"

"Oh, yes! I've seen her with it a many times. She used to say it gave her comfort in the long evenings when her father was kept late at the Porkeypine, or elsewhere, as the case might be."

"Still there might be another: one that you have not seen?"

Mrs. Stott shook her head.

But Lotty was not to be put off, and she commenced a search of the rooms, as well as her enormous hoops and floating silks would enable her, for they filled the place, and were every moment falling foul of things and carrying them off, as straws are borne away in the eddies of the whirlpool!

Mrs. Stott assisted, and at the same time kept an eye on the stranger, whom she only half-trusted, to see that she did not abstract anything of value or importance.

The search failed to produce anything in the form of a Bible. The books were few, and they were all arranged carefully in one place, most of them being covered up in neat holland wrappers, which Emmy had fashioned to preserve them.

Lotty was annoyed disappointed, despairing. Her dream of vengeance had come to an abrupt close. She was like the sleeper in the Arabian Nights, who in his sleep kicks over the basket which contains the brittle foundation of his projected fortune.

One gleam of hope alone broke through the darkness, and faint and glimmering enough it was. In turning over an old trunk they came upon a copy-book, along the bottoms of the pages of which the name of "Emily Kingston" was displayed in large hand, showing that this had been an early school-book belonging to Kingston's daughter. At the end of it was a half-filled page, on which, partly in red pencil, partly in ink, a child's hand had drawn various crude figures, and had evidently copied sentences from books or documents at hand. Among other efforts of penmanship, Lotty's quick eye caught the Scripture text of "Surely I come quickly. Amen." Near it was the word "Married," and at a little distance "A. Greggson" was written, an attempt having been made to imitate the signature.

Lotty looked, thought, then turned to Mrs. Stott.

"There must be another Bible," she said.

"Why?"

"Don't you see. Whoever filled in this blank half-sheet of paper had one before them. I remember enough of the book to know that the words here, 'Surely I

come quickly. Amen,' are at the end of the Revelations. That would be the last page of the Bible, and it's clear that at the same time and with the same pen that the child scribbled that, she also wrote 'Married' and 'A. Greggson,' and don't you see why she did it? Because they were on the fly-leaf of the Bible opposite the last page."

"Deary me! That's very likely," said Mrs. Stott.

"It's true. I'd swear to it," answered Lotty, and then taking Emmy's Bible and the copybook, she wrapped them in paper, and gave them to the landlady with a strict caution as to their safety.

"You'll hear more about them," she said, "and I shall come again and see how things go on. I won't lose sight of this man now he's once turned up. I can't. It's my only chance of making Sandoun do me justice, or of having my vengeance upon him."

With this she quitted the house.

It was early for the parks, so she strolled down towards Charing Cross, and thence into the Strand, wandering on, thinking of what had just happened, and trying to decide in her own mind how far she would be justified in trusting to Daniel Kingston to bring about the result she so longed for. She hardly noticed what passed around her, till she arrived opposite a newspaper office, where a crowd impeded her course. They were gathered about a placard just put out, and looking up at it mechanically, her eyes caught one line at the top of the bill. She read the words, "Death of Earl St. Omer."

They gave her a sudden shock, and she stopped short.

A gentleman who stepped out of a Hansom at the same moment, and whose eyes rested on the same line, was equally astounded. An exclamation of intense surprise escaped his lips.

Lotty turned and looked into his face.

It was Lord Sandoun.

There was that moment's hesitation which always occurs when two persons, half-enemies, meet in some moment intensely exciting to both, and then his lordship uttered an involuntary exclamation.

"Lotty!" he said.

She looked at him indignantly. Then a peculiar expression stole over her face.

"You can afford to be civil now," was her answer, as she pointed to the placard.

"Afford! What difference can it make to me?"

"She will be a beggar."

"Nonsense. She's the heiress."

"Is she? Ha! ha! Is she?"

Lotty lifted her fingers in a mocking action.

"Marry her," she said; "you're welcome for me, and you can add her debts to your own. A nice property they'll make together."

"Lotty," said Sandoun, "your absurd jealousy makes you ridiculous. What is it to you who I marry? You knew well enough—you always knew that I should never make you my wife!"

"Make me!" she sneered, contemptuously. "Do you think I'd have you at a gift? No; but you deceived me, cheated me, and all for *her* money. Marry her now, if you dare! Marry her, and I'll die happy!"

Lord Sandoun seized the arm of the girl as she went on in this frenzied manner, and gripped it fiercely.

"You've some devil's mischief working in your brain," he said; "what is it?"

"I wouldn't tell you if you trampled the life out of me under your feet," was her retort.

"Take care!" he ground between his teeth; "oppose me and you'll suffer for it."

"If I gain my end!" she shrieked out, "I'll die for it, willingly—willingly!"

She burst from him and was gone.

Sandoun looked after her, stupefied with rage and vexation, and it was some time before he noticed that he was the centre of a staring crowd.

(To be continued.)

A CURIOUS WOUND.—Dr. Champeaux, a surgeon in the French navy, was consulted in 1827 by a cavalry officer, M. Elope, about a small sore which he had had in the nape of the neck since June, 1815. This sore would sometimes heal, and remain closed for about a week or so; but at the end of that time it would again become painful—then open and suppurate as before, and so on. M. Elope had belonged to the Old Guard, and at the battle of Waterloo charged the British Cuirassiers; but was hit on the breast by a fragment of a howitzer shell, and fell insensible from his horse. He was just coming to himself again, when the Grenadiers, driven back by the Lancers, passed over him; and the latter, seeing he was not dead, wounded him in several places with their lances; one of these wounds was inflicted on his neck. Repulsed in their turn, the Lancers passed over him again, and the Grenadiers, seeing him attempting to get up, carried him to the rear, where his wounds were dressed. Since then he had always been afflicted with this fistulous sore. On probing it Dr. Champeaux felt something hard at the bottom, and soon discovered from the sound that it

must be a metallic fragment, most probably of a lance. The extraction was resolved upon and succeeded. The extraneous body extracted was found to be one of the thin brass scales which cover the straps of a helmet or Grenadier's cap, and which had been violently forced into the wound by the lance. This inconvenient guest had remained in for eleven years; the wound got well, and M. Elope only died this year, and therefore survived the battle forty-eight years, and the operation thirty-six.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jewit," "The Priole," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

DESPITE Ned's efforts, it was some time before the guilty man could disengage himself from the embrace of his wife, who clung to him with despairing affection. It was the struggle of virtue to save the object it had once loved from falling into the abyss of crime.

"Let me go!" he muttered, between his clenched teeth; "let me go, I say!"

But Mabel only clung to him the more firmly.

Finding there were no other means of disengaging himself, Ned struck her a violent blow upon the temple. Severe as was the pain, it was not there the outraged woman felt it most—it was upon her heart. Her grasp gradually relaxed, and she sank sobbing at his feet.

A moment more, and the murderer would have reached his victim, despite the efforts of his wife.

"The gun—the chair!" she frantically exclaimed; "defend yourself, but for pity's sake do not fire till the last extremity."

Nicholas Arden was not one of those who require a second hint, especially where their safety is concerned. He understood her meaning in an instant. Retreating behind the chair, he caught up Ned's gun, which Mabel had brought up with her, and deliberately levelled it at the head of her husband.

"Another step," he said, "and I fire!"

Ned gave a whistle, and his companion sprang in at the window.

"It's no use!" he cried; "we are two, and you can only hit one!"

"And which will be that one?" demanded the miser, coolly. "Not you, Ned Cantor—at least, not willingly. You may have the courage to cut the throat of a sleeping man, but not to face death. You are a cur—from your very heart a cur—for you have raised your hand against a woman!"

The two ruffians appeared embarrassed, for the keen, grey eye of the speaker was fixed immovably upon them, and his finger rested on the trigger of the gun, whose muzzle remained levelled at the head of the first of his assailants.

"Go!" continued the speaker; "for your wife's sake I permit you to depart. Try not my patience further."

The baffled ruffians began to retreat slowly towards the window. All at once Ned, suddenly recollecting himself, exclaimed—

"What fools we are! it is not loaded!"

His comrade, who stood between him and the miser, emboldened by the assertion, sprang forwards. The next instant he received the discharge in his chest, and sank upon the floor of the chamber, with a deep groan.

Seeing that one of his assailants had fallen, the old man, without a moment's hesitation, rushed upon Ned, who had already got one of his legs out of the window; to avoid the blow from the butt-end of the gun, which the miser dealt him, he threw himself bodily out, and fell heavily upon the ground.

"God!" shrieked Mabel, who, pale with terror, had watched the whole proceeding, "he is killed?"

"Humph!" ejaculated Nicholas Arden, doubtfully; "no great loss either."

"He was my husband!" added the unhappy woman.

"Doubtless, or he would not have beaten you."

"The father of my child!" she added.

"Who will live to be hanged!" continued the miser, who had advanced to the window, and could plainly distinguish Ned limping over the heath. "Is the door fastened below?" he added, sharply.

"Yes!"

"Have you more powder and shot?" he demanded.

"He will not return!" replied the wretched wife; "I shall see him no more! Husband and child both gone—both lost to me!"

And she continued to rock herself to and fro on the chair, in which she had seated herself, wringing her hands in silent anguish.

A faint moan from the wounded man attracted the attention of Nicholas Arden, who began carefully to examine the body. Convinced that the hurt was not mortal, he tore the sheet from his bed into long strips, and began carefully to tie the hands and feet of the young ruffian. Having provided against the possibility of resistance, he next attempted to bandage his wounds.

Let it not be imagined that he was prompted to this by humanity—he had no such weakness. The idea

had suddenly struck him, that Ned and his accomplice were the two thieves for whose apprehension a large reward had been offered; and the old man never neglected an opportunity of turning an honest penny. "There!" he exclaimed with an air of satisfaction; "he will do now, till they take him to Chelmsford!"

At the name of Chelmsford—the assize town of the county, where criminals were tried and executed—Black Will shuddered. The old man noticed it, and a cold, sarcastic smile played upon his thin lips.

The rest of the night was spent in painful watching. At daybreak, Nicholas Arden, after cautioning Mabel not to approach the prisoner, rose to keep his appointment with Lawyer Quirk and Sir Charles Briancourt at the post-house.

"Heed not a word the knave may say to you!" said the miser; there is a reward for him; and though I have taken him singly, and without the least assistance, you shall have something out of it. Yes—yes—I shall behave liberally to you! He will not remain here long," he added; "the instant I reach the post-house, I will send down those who will take charge of him."

Although this was uttered in a low tone, Black Will heard it distinctly; and he mentally vowed, if ever he escaped, that the speaker should pay dearly for attempting to consign him to gaol, bound like a sheep for the shambles. As for his wound, the ruffian felt assured that he should get over that. The gun, fortunately for him, had been charged only with small shot.

Mabel promised—harassed and broken-hearted as she was, she would have pledged herself to anything.

Still, it was not without certain misgivings that Nicholas Arden left the house—so anxious did he feel about the reward—so fearful lest any one should step in and divide the claim with him.

For some time the wounded man and Mabel ate and drank each other in silence. Will did not lack that peculiar species of cunning which serves the bad man instead of wisdom—the knave in lieu of honesty.

"This is a nice night's work!" he muttered.

The unhappy woman sighed deeply.

"For myself," continued the speaker, "I don't so much mind—I shall leave neither wife nor child to be disgraced by my death; but it's a very different case with Ned. It will be all over with him, if I am taken, poor fellow."

"They will spare him, for my sake!" said Mabel.

"Of course they will spare him!" answered Black Will, ironically; "the law is so very merciful, and Nicholas Arden will be sure to recommend him to mercy, for attempting to rob and murder him. But who, I should like to know, will screen him on account of the pedlar who disappeared so suddenly, after sleeping at your house?"

"Wretch—you do not mean that!"

She could not complete the sentence. Horror and shame had nearly choked her.

"Indeed, but I do mean it!" continued the ruffian, with a chuckle; "Ned pledged the old man's watch at Burrow's, in the High-street. I wonder," he added, "if they were to dig by the old lime-kiln, whether they would find the body! Well, no matter—Ned and I have been faithful pals—I suppose we shall hang together!"

And to show his indifference at the prospect of such a fate, the wretch whistled the "Rogue's March," till the pain of his wound checked him.

"You would betray him?" said Mabel.

"Why not? He has deserted me! Why should I swing alone? No; since I am taken, it shall all out! Just as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb—that's my motto!"

The woman reflected for a few moments—weighed in her mind the numerous robberies that had lately been committed, and the probability that her husband had been connected with them. The result of her deliberations was fearfully against his innocence.

"What do you wish me to do?" she said, despairingly.

"Cut those infernal swaddling clothes—that's all!"

Mabel, without speaking a word, left the room. The few moments of absence were full of painful suspense to Black Will, who well knew that his life depended upon the resolution she had taken. Presently she returned, with a knife in her hand. The heart of the prisoner bounded with joy.

The next moment his limbs were free. He stood erect, and shook himself like a water-dog.

"Where will you fly to?" she inquired, with desperate calmness.

"Where I shall be safe!" replied Will, with a laugh; "where neither beak nor shark will be able to find me! Give me but one quarter of an hour's start, and I defy the fiend himself to catch me!"

"Heaven will know where to find you!" said the unhappy woman; "hide where you may, Will, its eye will be upon you!"

With a laugh of mingled bravado and triumph, he left the cottage, leaving its mistress overwhelmed by the bitter sense of degradation, misery, and shame.

Nothing could exceed the rage and indignation of Nicholas Arden when he found, on his return from the

post-house, with assistance to secure his prisoner, that Black Will had escaped. He loaded his preserver with fierce invectives, and tore his grey locks in the madness of his disappointed avenger.

"Fifty pounds!" he screamed; "fifty pounds reward, which I had honestly earned at the risk of my life! Gone—stolen from me! Pay me that!" he added; "pay me that—or you shall hang in his place!"

It was with the utmost difficulty that Bandy-legged Jem and the village constable succeeded in removing him from the Travellers' Rest. His last words, as they forced him from the door, were—

"Pay me—pay me!"

"God!" exclaimed the wretched Mabel, as she closed the door after her unwelcome visitors; "is this my dream of life?" Tears came to her relief, and she wept bitterly.

CHAPTER VIII.

Crime's ready tool; from choice a knave—not want.
Old Play.

Few men were more vindictive in their nature than Lawyer Quirk and his worthless client, Sir Charles Briancourt. Both bitterly resented the conduct of Mabel at the inquest, and eagerly seized the opportunity of reaching the wife through her guilty husband—for whose apprehension a large reward was offered, as well as that of his confederate, Black Will. As for Mabel herself she was permitted to remain undisturbed in her cottage for the present—the legal notice had not yet expired—it wanted a few days to the time when the baronet would be enabled to turn her adrift upon the world, to starve, beg, or steal—he cared not which; though, if he had a choice, most probably he would have preferred the latter.

Few things escaped the notice of Mr. Quirk, whose long intercourse with the most worthless portion of humanity had given him a certain tact, not only in detecting, but in tracing out the motives of others. He had long been anxious—exceedingly anxious—that the marriage of his daughter with Sir Charles should be acknowledged; but the awe in which both he and his son-in-law stood of the Dowager Lady Briancourt, had hitherto prevented any steps being taken towards the accomplishment of his wishes—she had so much in her power.

The influence which Barnes possessed over his haughty mistress had given him food for cogitation. The lawyer reflected—surmised—supposed—cogitated,—and then reflected again. There was a secret—he felt convinced of that—but the nature of that secret baffled even his ingenuity to discover. To have sounded the old house-steward would have been at once to put him on his guard; he therefore wisely forbore, but he quietly made his observations—gossiping first with one servant, then with another. It was a general remark throughout the household, that they had never known Mr. Quirk so condescending and agreeable before.

Things were in this state, when news was brought, late one evening, to the hall, that Ned Cantor had been taken. The eyes of Sir Charles sparkled with satisfaction—his adviser merely smiled. One thought of the gratification of his revenge—the other of the use he could make of him.

The baronet being the nearest magistrate, the prisoner was brought before him for examination.

"Leave the affair in my hands," whispered the lawyer, as they descended to the library for the purpose of committing Ned to the gaol of Chelmsford. "Have you any strong place where you can keep him securely for the night?"

"But why keep him?"

"I have no time now to explain that," replied the man of law, "are not our interests one? Surely you can trust to me. Enough, that by this fellow's means I can find the way to extricate ourselves from the embarrassing position we are placed in with your mother."

Sir Charles looked surprised, but said nothing.

On entering the library, they found the prisoner, handcuffed, in the custody of the village constable and Bandy-legged Jem, by whose joint exertions he had been taken. There had evidently been a severe struggle between them—for Ned's clothes were torn, and there was a fearful bruise upon his forehead, from a blow he had received from the staff of the officer. He looked doggedly—nay, even insolently—round him, well knowing what sort of favour to expect at the hands he had fallen into.

The constable and Bandy-legged Jem began by stating that, after a desperate resistance, they had secured their prisoner, whom they encountered near the old lime-kiln on the heath, and, after reading the hand-bill offering a reward for his apprehension, requested Sir Charles to sign his committal to Chelmsford.

The baronet looked at Mr. Quirk, leaving the initiative of the affair to him.

"Sir Charles cannot do that!" said the lawyer, coolly. "He must first have the deposition of Nicholas Arden."

"At least his honour can remand him," suggested the constable—a proceeding which would have been equally inconvenient.

"Certainly," answered the man of law, "the magistrate can remand him—there is no doubt of that! In fact it is his bounden duty, under some circumstances, to do so. But, in the present instance, would it not be advisable to send for the prosecutor to appear here in the morning?"

"But there are other charges!" observed the postilion.

"Which may be gone into at the same time," readily answered Quirk. "If I may advise, Sir Charles," he added, addressing his client, "the best thing you can do will be to detain this man in the strong room at the hall till to-morrow. There is no possibility of his escape—and when Mr. Arden appears, the affair can be fully examined."

Neither Jem nor the constable approved of what appeared to them an unnecessary delay; but what could they object—both ignorant men, and poor? It was accordingly arranged as the speaker suggested. The officer was despatched to Colchester, to summon Mr. Arden to appear at ten o'clock the following day; and Jem was dismissed to the post-house, after having first seen Ned duly consigned to the muniment or strong room of Briancourt Manor—which said room, being built entirely of granite, without window of any kind, and the door of iron, presented little chance of escape.

Still they did not feel satisfied; and after they left the house, it was agreed between them that Bandy-legged Jem should remain in the grounds, and watch the mansion, to guard against foul-play, whilst his companion proceeded on his errand to Colchester.

"Really," observed the baronet to his father-in-law, after they had retired to their wine in the drawing-room, "I cannot comprehend—"

"It is not necessary that you should!" said the lawyer, interrupting him. "I know your anxiety to punish this fellow. Very natural! But it is better to use him first and punish him afterwards."

"Use him?"

"Ay—make an instrument of him."

"But to what end—to what purpose?" demanded Sir Charles Briancourt.

Quirk filled a glass with wine, and nodded knowingly.

"Do speak plainly!"

"Plainly, then—to obtain not only your mother's forgiveness, but approbation of your marriage with my daughter."

"You do not know her," said his client with a sigh. "She would sooner see me in my coffin!"

"Very likely."

"She will look upon such an alliance with horror."

"Very probably!" answered Mr. Quirk, not at all pleased with the complimentary speech of his son-in-law; "but she shall consent to it, for all that! Nay, more—content herself with her marriage settlement, and forego all further control over the estates."

"And you will accomplish this by means of Ned Cantor?" exclaimed the baronet.

"Even so; but ask me no more questions. I am a man of action rather than words; you know what I have already achieved, and may surely trust to me for the rest!"

By this time it was midnight, and the household had already retired to rest—so the two worthies separated; the baronet to his own room, and the lawyer, as he said, to his.

As he left the drawing-room, he did not forget to take the key of Ned Cantor's prison with him.

The muniment or strong room of Briancourt Manor was situated in the northern wing of the building, which was comparatively uninhabited—for the apartments were gloomy, small, and inconvenient. This wing was the only remaining portion of a more ancient mansion, which had been partially battered down by the cannon of Fairfax during the civil wars; the rest was modern, having been erected by the grandfather of the present baronet.

Although the prisoner had been left several hours to himself, he had not once closed his eyes, but, like a wolf caught in a trap, remained wakeful, and listening to every sound. The conduct of the lawyer had puzzled him, and he felt that vague kind of hope which sometimes sustains the criminal to the last moment. Something, he felt assured, would turn up, and his spirits rose accordingly.

The hall clock had struck the hour of two, when he heard a footstep cautiously approaching the door of his prison. The eagerness, the suspense of the ruffian became so intense, that he scarcely breathed; it stopped; the next instant he heard the ponderous key turn in the wards of the lock.

"All right!" he murmured, as he sank back, and pretended to sleep, upon the straw which had been hastily thrown into one corner of the room, to serve him for a bed.

Presently some one touched him with his foot. He looked up, and, despite the pains which he had taken to disguise himself, recognized Mr. Quirk.

"Is it daylight?" said the prisoner.

"If it were," replied the visitor, "my presence here would be useless. Listen to me—I know that your sleep was a feigned one; men with halters round their necks seldom sleep!"

Ned clenched his teeth and groaned.

"What would you do, to stand free upon Lendon Heath, with fifty pounds in your pocket, and three hours' start of your pursuers?"

"Anything!" replied the ruffian, his eyes sparkling with ferocious joy at the hope held out to him; "risk my life—my soul!"

"Pooh—pooh!" interrupted the lawyer, with a quiet chuckle; "what should I do with your soul? If you have such a thing, it is mortgaged far beyond its value already! The service I require depends upon bone, muscle, nerve, and sinew."

"Ah! you do require a service, then?" observed Ned Cantor. "I thought as much!"

"Else why should I propose fifty pounds and your liberty to you?" was the reply.

"True—very true!" said the prisoner. "Well, sir, the service?"

"Are you acquainted with Barnes, the house-steward?" inquired his visitor, lowering his voice to a whisper.

"Yes! Must I murder him?"

"Murder! Ridiculous! Do you suppose that a man of my respectability would suggest such a thing?" replied Mr. Quirk, in a tone by which he intended to convey an idea that his probity and humanity were much shocked. "No; all I want you to do is to contrive some means of procuring me a small box which he keeps in the cabinet at the side of his bed."

"What does it contain?"

"Papers."

"And how am I to obtain it?" demanded Ned, doggedly.

"That is your affair," answered the conscientious lawyer; "he sleeps in the little pavilion at the end of this wing of the hall."

"Should he awake?"

"Your affair again!" observed the tempter. "All I can do is to lead you to the door; of course you would never be so unprincipled as to offer violence, or so indiscreet as to let me know it, if you did! Should you succeed, the fifty pounds and liberty are yours."

"And should I fail?"

"In that case," said his visitor, "I should first blow out your brains, and then alarm the house, stating that I had surprised you in an attempt to escape!"

The coolness with which the respectable, rich villain uttered this fearful threat, completely subdued the poor, disreputable one; who replied, that he would not fail.

"I am sure you will not!" observed the lawyer, with a smile; "a man's energy seldom flags when every step he takes lessens the distance between the gibbet and himself."

Mr. Quirk drew from his pocket a pair of exquisitely-mounted pistols, carefully convinced himself that the charges were all right, and deliberately examined the triggers and caps. This was done, not so much for his own satisfaction, as to impress upon Ned the folly of attempting to escape.

"Are you ready?" he said.

"Quite ready," submissively answered the ruffian.

"Remember it is the box in the cabinet, on the right-hand side of the bed," whispered the old man; "you cannot mistake it—there are two seals upon the lid. Bring it me, and not only your liberty, but the fifty guineas I promised you are yours."

"I'll bring it!" muttered Ned, with dogged resolution, between his teeth; "but should the old fellow awake—"

"I have nothing to do with that," interrupted the tempter.

Taking up the lamp, which had been left burning in the strong room, the speaker motioned the prisoner to precede him, indicating the turns he was to take by a motion of his finger—for they were drawing too near the pavilion in which the house-steward slept to venture to speak. At the end of a long, vaulted corridor, they perceived a door. It opened into the chamber of Mr. Barnes.

Ned Cantor turned, and looked inquiringly towards the lawyer, who nodded in the affirmative. They had reached the spot.

In the centre of the door was a single pane of glass, with a green silk curtain—by drawing which the inmate of the room could watch the approach of visitors. The ruffian, after a few moments' reflection, made signs to Quirk that he required some implement or means to cut the glass.

"The idiot!" mentally exclaimed the lawyer; "he will never be able to creep through that narrow space!"

Ned repeated his signs, intimating that it was not for the purpose of creeping through that he wanted to remove the pane, but to introduce his arm, and unlock the door from the inside.

"Not such a fool as I thought!" added Quirk, as soon as he fully comprehended the intention; at the

same time he drew from his finger a valuable diamond ring, and placed it in the hand of his accomplice.

In a few moments he heard a low, scratching sound—it was the diamond cutting the window; the next difficulty was to prevent the pieces falling on the floor on the inside, and so startling the sleeper. But the wit of the thief was equal to the emergency—applying his lips close to the glass, he drew his breath, thereby producing the same effect as a sucker—after several attempts, which required great nicety, he at last succeeded in detaching that portion of the pane which had been cut on the outside, and caught it in his hands as it fell—a feat which he accomplished with such dexterity, that the man of law, who stood silently looking on, was struck with admiration.

"Clever fellow!" he murmured. "Clever fellow! Pity such talents should be thrown away."

Ned introduced his arm, and cautiously opened the door—so plain had been his instructions, that he easily found the cabinet and the box, which he recognized in the dark, by the seals upon the lid—in a few moments he returned, bearing it with him.

No sooner was Quirk convinced of his success, than he cautiously retreated along the passage, leaving his accomplice to follow him; they soon reached the little breakfast-room. Once inside, the lawyer locked the door.

"So," he said, "you have won your liberty!"

"And the fifty guineas!" added Ned.

"Doubtless!" replied the old man, after examining the seals. "Now, tell me," he continued, "and frankly, how do you intend to dispose of the money and yourself?"

"Make the best of my way to London."

"Good!"

"From thence I shall sail to America."

"Better!"

"And lead an honest life."

"Humbug!" ejaculated the lawyer; "it is not in you, Ned! Honestly, in your position, implies labour—which you have an instinctive aversion to; perseverance, endurance, courage—I mean moral courage—three qualities foreign to your nature! Listen to me," he continued; "in the park you will find one of Sir Charles's hunters—take it, and ride as if you were riding a race with death. Once in the metropolis, I will provide for your safety!"

"You?"

"I!"

Ned Cantor looked at him doubtfully—hesitating whether or not he might trust him.

"I have a use for you!" added Mr. Quirk.

The doubt vanished; he felt assured he could—the respectable villain required the services of the poor one.

The tempter opened his pocket-book, and hastily wrote a few words in pencil upon one of the leaves, which he tore out and directed—"Mr. Snape, Serjeants' Inn"—it was the name of his confidential clerk.

"Find the person to whom this is addressed," continued the old man; "give him the note, and leave the rest to his care; he will provide you with a retreat where the strong arm of the law—and it is very strong, Ned—will fail to reach you! I will smooth over your little affair with Mr. Arden," he added; "in three days you shall see me."

"And what am I to do for this kindness," demanded the astonished felon.

"All in good time, Ned—all in good time! Nothing wrong, of course!" answered the lawyer, with a chuckle.

"Of course not!" replied Ned Cantor; "you would not be the man to propose such a thing—certainly not!"

And the two men, so worthy of each other, smiled and jested at the prospect of their future villainy.

Mr. Quirk, who was a person of business, felt that it was time for his agent and himself to part—carefully unbarring the shutters, he opened the sash with as little noise as possible.

"There lies your road!" he whispered, at the same time placing the promised reward in his hands; "remember, in three days!"

"In three days!" replied Ned; "I'll not fail you!"

So saying, he disappeared, and his confederate, after closing the shutters returned to his own room, carrying the box with him.

"How stupid!" he exclaimed, as he broke the seal, and sat down to examine the contents; "I forgot to ask Ned to return my ring!"

Great was the consternation on the following morning, when the flight of the prisoner and the robbery of the house-steward's room was discovered. The servants looked upon each other with suspicion—each doubted his fellow.

That Ned Cantor must have had an accomplice was evident to all—for the keys of the muniment room were found in the lock on the outside of the door.

When the groom informed Sir Charles Briancourt of the disappearance of the horse, the baronet affected to be very angry, and spoke of offering a hundred guineas

reward for the apprehension of the thief; but his anger gradually subsided.

Even Nicholas Arden, the miser, was pacified, after an interview with Mr. Quirk, and took no further steps in prosecuting Ned—in fact, every one appeared content, except Barnes and Bandy-legged Jem. The former, although he said but little, was evidently deeply chagrined at the loss of his box; and the latter clamoured for the reward of which he had been deprived.

"No matter!" the sturdy old man would mutter; "they haven't altogether deceived me—I shall have him yet! Thof I beant a lawyer, nor a barronite, I know a thing or two! We shall see!"

Those who heard the disappointed postilion vent his spleen in these and similar obscure threats, paid but little attention to what they considered his ravings.

"As if such respectable persons as Lawyer Quirk, or Sir Charles," they observed, one to another, "could have anything to do with a low ruffian like Ned Cantor! Ridiculous!"

And so the matter dropped.

Three days afterwards, Mr. Quirk left Briancourt Hall for London, promising his son-in-law that he would return within a week—when, he assured him, everything would be made pleasant with his mother, touching his long-concealed marriage.

Probably the baronet was not so sanguine as his lawyer, for he listened to his promise in moody silence.

CHAPTER IX.

The cold, wide world before me—heaven my guide—
Conscience my only prop.

ALTHOUGH Mabel had long since ceased to love her husband—for love, in a pure and gentle nature, cannot exist when once respect has faded—still her woman's heart rejoiced at the news of his escape. She was once more alone in the world—alone, in the completest sense of the word—heartbroken and desolate. The Travellers' Rest had obtained an evil name, and her former customers entirely deserted her. After much consideration, she resolved to sell the furniture of her little cottage, honestly pay the quarter's rent, and quit the place, in search of the two children—her darling Meg and the orphan of her former mistress.

"God will guide me," murmured the poor creature; "and the dead watch over me. I am sure I shall succeed."

Her design was easily put into execution. When trinkets, clothes, everything save the old oak chair and Meg's goldfinch, had been disposed of, and her debts paid, Mabel found herself possessed of exactly three pounds ten shillings—no great sum to cast herself upon the world with; but her maternal heart was strong in its love for her lost child—strong in its trusting hopefulness.

"Holloa, missus!" shouted a well-known voice, as the late landlady of the Travellers' Rest slowly walked down the high street of Colchester, with the bird-cage in her hand, and the heavy oaken chair upon her aching head. "Where are you a-goin' to?"

She turned and recognized the old postilion, Bandy-legged Jem.

"To Mr. Arden's," she replied.

"He'll never lend anything on them articles," observed the man, in a tone of commiseration—for he was not a bad-hearted fellow in the main. "Besides, the bird would eat; and nothing that requires food was ever welcome within his doors."

"Perhaps you are not aware that I saved his life?" answered Mabel, colouring deeply as she uttered the words.

"No, I ain't!"

"And he promised to do something for me!"

"So he will!" said the postilion, with a broad grin; "pray for you; or, as a very great favour, ask you to rest yourself after your walk; but he will neither ask you to break bread nor moisten your lips at his expense. He would never forgive himself such a piece of extravagance!"

Poor Mabel looked very downcast.

"That chair appears monstrous heavy," added Jem. "I should like for once to get a peep at the inside of the old miser's den—so, if you like, I'll carry it for you."

The offer was gratefully accepted; and away they both trudged towards the house of Nicholas Arden—the old man with the chair, and the woman carrying the bird and cage in her hand. She might have sold them for half-a-crown—a serious sum in her circumstances; but her heart would not let her. As we said before, they had been her daughter Meg's.

Although it was a bitter cold day, and the snow was falling thickly upon the ground, there was no fire in the room in which the miser's daughter and the boy Goliath were both seated. The truth was, they dared not light one, even if they had had the means—so bitter were Nicholas Arden's remonstrances against such extravagance. Alice was busily occupied in mending an old cloth cloak, in which she sometimes ventured to the neighbouring church. The boy sat upon a stool opposite

to her, watching with melancholy earnestness the quick motion of her hand.

As we have previously described his young mistress, it will be only fitting now to add a sketch of her companion.

Goliah Obie was about thirteen, and not ill-grown for his age. Left an orphan while yet in swaddling-clothes, he had passed the first eight years of his life in the poor-house, from which pleasant place he had been transferred to the parish school, where the master employed him, during play-hours, in cleaning boots, sweeping out the school-room, and running of errands. For two years the poor boy endured this species of slavery, disguised under the name of schooling. True, his education was not altogether neglected—for, being a quick-witted lad, he not only learned to read and write, but the first four rules of arithmetic—which, together with his knowledge of the catechism, made him regarded, in some sort, as the model scholar of the establishment—a distinction far more annoying than profitable—Mr. Satchel, the master, caning him rather more than less on that account.

When any of the parish authorities called to visit the school, Goliah was sure to be called up and examined. It might have made angels weep to hear the poor little trembling wretch declare, in answer to the question of what his godfathers and godmothers had taught him—

"To be content with that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me."

Content! as if that all-wise and beneficent Being, whose very essence is love, had ever ordained that infancy should be subjected to the kickings, cuffings, and cruelties of a parish schoolmaster.

At the age of twelve, the poor boy had been put out to service by the guardians to Mr. Nicholas Arden, who was to pay two pounds a year, clothe and feed him. The money really was paid—the authorities took care of that—for it went to liquidate a portion of the expenses they had incurred on his account. At least, it was presumed to do; but, as for the feeding and clothing, the former was worse than the fare in the work-house; and a respectable scoundrel would have felt itself insulted by a proposal to change garments with Goliah Obie.

"It's very cold, Miss Alice!" said the boy, in a humble tone. "Don't you think so?"

"It is cold!" replied his young mistress; "but we will have a fire as soon as my father leaves home—I know he has an appointment at four; and, Goliah, I have a treat for you."

"Any dinner?" demanded the lad, eagerly.

"Yes," answered Alice with a faint smile; "an egg! I found it this morning in the coach-house. One of Squire Miller's fowls flew over, and laid it."

"I do wish it had been an ostrich's!" exclaimed the poor fellow, with a ravenous look. "Squire Miller's fowls are nothing but bantams. What are you a-goin' to have?" he added.

"Nothing, Goliah. I am not hungry!"

"Not hungry!" repeated the boy with a look of most unfeigned astonishment. "Well that is odd. I'm always hungry—master says it's because I'm a-growing—I wish I had done growing! He never eats—lives on air, I suppose, or the chink of his money. What a heap of bread all his gold would buy—wouldn't it, Miss Alice?"

As if overcome with the magnitude of the idea, Goliah ceased speaking, and sank into a deep reverie, from which he was awakened by a loud ringing of the gate-bell.

"I'll go!" said his mistress, rising from her seat; "do not disturb yourself!"

"An egg!" muttered the boy to himself, as soon as he was alone; "well, it is something! I wonder how a chicken would eat?" he added, with a ferocious expression. "Lord—lord! how happy some people are! Squire Miller's boy boasts that they have dinner both in the parlour and kitchen every day! Every day," he slowly repeated; "no—I can't believe that; and yet he looks quite fat enough for it to be true!"

Alice soon returned, followed by Mabel and Bandy-legged Jem, carrying the chair.

"Why won't it the butcher?" grumbled Goliah to himself; "but he never comes here—forgotten the way, I suppose!"

"Sit down," said Alice, in a gentle tone of voice—for Mabel had explained her errand. "I will inform my father you are here. I am sure he will see you, and grant your request. I am sorry—very sorry," she added, with a deep blush, "that I have nothing in the house to offer you; but my father dines out, and Goliah and I, we make shift with anything!"

"Nothing, you mean, miss!" muttered the boy.

The poor girl would not hear him, but instantly left the room.

"Well," said the postilion, "this is a queer place to live in!"

"Nobody does live in it!" observed Goliah, bitterly;

"they starve in it!"

"No fire!" continued Jem, pursuing his commentaries.

"What's the use of fire when there's nothing to

cook?" said the boy. "Master don't eat—Miss Alice don't eat—and when I complain of being hungry, they tell me it's nothing but growing pains! All I know is, that they grow worse and worse every day! Grumble—grumble," he added, rubbing his hand over his empty stomach; "I only wish you could feel 'em!"

Bandy-legged Jem looked as if he had not the slightest inclination to feel 'em; and Mabel, with her usual kindness, drew from her pocket a slice of bread and meat which she had brought with her, and offered it to the speaker.

Goliah did not require much pressing—but clutched it, like a hungry vulture, in his claw—it disappeared in an instant.

Nicholas Arden was busy, as usual, with his books, when his daughter entered the room to announce the visit of Mabel.

"And what does she want?" he demanded, in a harsh tone; "money—money, I suppose? Well, tell her she may keep the sixpence I paid her the night I stayed at her house for my bed, and did not use it—it is all I can afford!"

"She does not come for money, father," mildly answered Alice; "All she asks is, that you should take charge of—"

"Take charge!" interrupted the miser, eagerly; "has she any gold, or silver—of course I'll take charge of it—it is my duty as a Christian to do so! It will be quite safe with me!"

"Of a curious old chair," continued his daughter; "which her former mistress gave her—and a singing-bird."

"A singing-bird!" repeated the old man sharply; "I'll have no birds here, to eat me out of house and home. As for the chair, well and good, she may leave that; but no bird—no bird!"

"It will not cost much—merely a few crumbs," urged the petitioner.

"Crumbs," exclaimed the miser; "no business to have any crumbs! No—no—I say no."

"Father," said the poor girl, in a saddened tone—for she was grieved at the display of his ingratitude and avarice—"Mabel saved your life—you must not—shall not refuse her!"

"Shall not!" repeated Nicholas Arden, eyeing her with a frown.

"Shall not!" repeated Alice, firmly; "you forget that I am of age, and the right I have to speak."

At the allusion to her being of age, the countenance of her father changed—a bitter scowl darkened his visage. It was seldom, very seldom, that his daughter ventured to brave him, but when she did, he invariably gave way.

"Alice," he said, after a momentary struggle, "you will one day urge me too far; but since you will have it so, send the woman in—I'll see her."

The fair girl left the room without a word in search of Mabel.

"This comes," continued the miser, "of having children—sullen and disobedient children—who would rob us of our gold whilst living, or squander it when we are dead. She shall never squander mine—I'll bury it first, where human hands can never find it. I should like to spread my winding-sheet upon it. I could sleep soundly then—soundly," he added; "the grave would have lost its terrors."

The old man resumed the examination of his books—the record of his gains—of a long life of grinding privation and oppression. One item sorely displeased him—it was the large amount of his wife's fortune—by right the inheritance of Alice—the miser had not even a life interest in it—and yet he had used it—managed it, and considered it for so many years as his own, that he bitterly resented the slightest allusion to his daughter's claims upon it.

"Would she were dead!" he kept muttering; "would she were dead!"

CHAPTER X.

Forth to the world she goes! only one hope
Sustains her feeble steps—a mother's hope—
Which clings through time and distance to her child—
Trusts against reason, faithful to itself.

Crown.

WHEN Alice returned, accompanied by Mabel and Bandy-legged Jem—the latter carrying the chair—her father was so absorbed by his books, that she was obliged to touch him on the shoulder, to call his attention to his visitors, who stood at a respectful distance from the table.

"Ah—yes! I recollect!" exclaimed the old man, pettishly. "Well!" he added, looking up, and eyeing his visitor sharply, "you have come to beg a service of me? Every one begs—few pay! Had you not connived at the escape of your rascally husband, I should have done something handsome for you, certainly—something very handsome!"

"Yes!" muttered Jem; "rattled his money in her ear, and paid her with the chink of his gold! That's all she would ever wring from him!"

"As it is," continued the old man, "we are quits! I have lost the reward for his apprehension—fifty pounds!

Fifty pounds!" he repeated. "It would have been the making of me—for I am poor—miserably poor!"

"In spirit I'll swear he is!" mentally exclaimed the postilion. "His heart, like his money-box, is of iron, and opens with a screw."

"I merely did my duty, sir!" replied Mabel, humbly. "And the service I ask will not cost you much. It is merely to take charge of an old chair, which I dearly prize! It was my young lady's gift to me—the only memorial I possess of her past kindness. You cannot wonder that I value it!"

"It's a weakness to value anything," observed Nicholas Arden, testily, "except money! Well—for the chair, I don't care if I oblige you, although it will take up a great deal of room, and ought to be paid for! There, you may leave it!"

"And this poor bird!" added his visitor, in a suppliant tone.

"Who is to feed it?" exclaimed the miser, angrily. "It will eat me out of house and home. I am beggared already by an extravagant child and a hungry servant, whose appetite is as insatiable as the grave! Would it could be filled as cheaply! How am I to be repaid for its food?"

Mabel faltered something about its song.

"Song!" repeated the man of gold; "I hate songs! Take it away—make money of it. You will find some fool to purchase it."

"Father," whispered his daughter Alice, "remember your promise. It shall be at no charge to you; I will gather the groundsel and seeds in the garden. Perhaps," she added, with a sigh, "it may cheer me in my solitude."

Poor Mabel's heart was ready to break. It is the last drop which makes the cup flow over. The bird had been a pet—the plaything of her lost child—and the idea of selling it—she could have wanted bread first.

"Come, sir," said Jem, for the first time speaking aloud, "you can't refuse. The bird is a goldfinch."

This was uttered in a half-sarcastic, half-persuasive tone, as if he fancied that the word "gold" was the only key to the old man's heart.

"Well, well," answered Nicholas Arden, at last, "you may leave it. I will trust to your honesty to repay me, if ever you have the means; if not, I suppose I must sell it."

"Or eat it," thought the postilion.

Unguarded as the permission was, the disconsolate woman thankfully accepted it, and was about to leave the room when the miser called her back, and inquired, with an air of affected indifference, how she intended to dispose of herself.

"I am about to seek my child, sir," replied Mabel, bursting into tears, "who was stolen from me the night my dear young lady died. I'll seek her through the world but I will find her."

"The world is a wide place," was the sneering comment.

"Is it wider than a mother's heart?" demanded his visitor.

"Women are strange beings," ejaculated the old man.

"That's true," exclaimed Bandy-legged Jem, "and plagu'd hard to drive. Uneasy with a curb, and apt to shy if you trust them in a snaffle. That's why I have remained a bachelor. Know too much for them."

"Miss Briancourt's child, I heard," resumed the miser, "was taken at the same time yours was stolen? At least, I heard so, eh?"

"Mrs. George Stanley's child was, sir," answered Mabel, colouring deeply, for she could with difficulty restrain her indignation.

Nicholas Arden smiled incredulously, and asked if she were simple enough to believe in the tale of their marriage.

"I am certain of it," was the reply.

"Where?" demanded the old man.

Alice saw, from the vivacity of her father's manner, that he felt deeply interested in the question. Bitter experience had proved to her, that where money was concerned he had few scruples, either of honesty or conscience; and she made a sign to Mabel not to answer him.

"I cannot tell you where," replied the woman. "I spoke from my knowledge of her purity and worth. She knew both misery and poverty—the thousand ills that wring and break the heart; but never shame!"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Nicholas Arden, in a tone of disappointment; "she was a woman!"

The cynic little knew how much of goodness, suffering, patient endurance, and affection are comprised in that one word, "woman"—the name for slaves, whose chains are twined with flowers; and because they are so twined, man, the heartless task-master, expects his slave to smile, as if the iron did not corrode and fester in the soul, despite the wreaths which hide it.

"Well," continued the miser, "should you succeed and discover both the children, let me know: I will pay you," he added, reluctantly, "for your trouble; that is, provided I receive the first intelligence!"

"You, sir?" said Mabel, with unfeigned surprise.

"What interest can you have in the lost child of Mrs. Stanley?" demanded his daughter Alice.

"Interest! None, child—none! But we must do something sometimes, from humanity!"

"True," observed the postilion, sarcastically. "Take half per cent. less when the security is unexceptionable. It's my belief that the children warn't stolen at all."

"Not stolen?" replied Mabel.

"If they were," continued Jem, "your husband stole 'em. I took him a note from Lawyer Quirk, the very night the poor lady died; and I know that Ned was on friendly terms with the old rascal—for he assisted him to escape from the hall, after the constable and I had taken him: I was watching in the park, and saw it!"

"Saw Lawyer Quirk release your prisoner from the hall?" eagerly repeated the old man.

"At least I as good as saw him. It could have been no one else!"

Nicholas Arden made a hasty memorandum in a ponderous ledger, with brass clasps, which was on the table.

"There—that will do," he said; "you may go. I know where to find you, should I require your evidence."

All but Mabel were convinced that Bandy-legged Jem had spoken the truth; but she still doubted it. Her husband's grief and rage at the loss of little Meg, whom he idolized, had been too real to be affected. Ned had both cursed and beaten her for what he called her negligence and folly; and, bad as he was, her woman's heart would not suspect him of having invented an excuse for the mere pleasure of ill-using her.

She entered into no explanation, but took her leave of the miser, after once more thanking him for his kindness, and, accompanied by Alice, who carried the bird, and Jem left the room.

"You have brought the bird?" observed Mabel to Miss Arden.

The poor girl coloured deeply, for she could not explain her reasons, without lessening, if possible, the opinion which her visitor already entertained of her father. The fact was, she was fearful lest the old miser, in his avarice, should bring the neck of the little songster, to save the ruinous expense of keeping it.

She murmured something, therefore, about its being better in her care than her father's.

(To be continued.)

DREADFULLY BORED.

"I do wish, Horace, you would listen to me when I speak."

The gentleman addressed turned his head lazily from its old position to give the speaker a calm smile.

"I am listening, mamma," he said, in a drawling tone.

"Now, Horace, do be serious, and take some interest in our expected visitor."

"How can I be interested in a female whom I have never seen. She may be old—"

"Just nineteen."

"Ugly—"

"A handsome brunette."

"Stupid—"

"Very accomplished and witty."

"Poor—"

"Independent! Heiress to some ten thousand pounds. You know she is my niece, an orphan, and a pet with all of us. When my sister Mary died, leaving the poor child an orphan, we agreed to take her alternately to our homes, until she married, or was old enough to live alone. It is my turn for the second time now. But I declare, Horace, you are asleep!"

There was certainly ground for the suspicion. The young man's head drooped on the back of his comfortable arm-chair, his eyes were closed, and the faultless features were in perfect repose. He was very tall, with every appearance of great strength. His broad shoulders, full chest, and muscular limbs, as they relaxed in that quiet slumber, gave his stepmother the thought—not new—of a sleeping giant, and, following that, a regret that such strength and health should be thus wasted in a daylight sleep.

Her exclamation was followed by a sigh, and she went on with her sewing, full of serious reflections of the future which lay before this stepson, in whose welfare so much of her own happiness was bound up.

She had married his father five years before the date of my story, and found Horace a tall man, already far beyond her control. He gave her his affection, and treated her with a gentle, courteous deference which was the perfection of manner. She was still young, only some four or five years his senior. So, in a short time, the formal Mrs. Walton was exchanged for Lizzie, and the two became like brother and sister.

He was a spoiled child. Rich, motherless, and idolized by his father, he had run through pleasure, travelling, and gentlemanly studies, till twenty-five found him *blasé*, languid, inert, or, as he expressed it, "bored to death." Yet as he had no vices, was much at home, and needed no profession, Mr. Walton evidently considered him a model young man.

The afternoon had glided into twilight, when Horace was roused by Lizzie's gleeful

"Here they come!" And the grinding of the gravel under the carriage-wheels confirmed the news. He opened his eyes, and, looking from the window, saw his father handing a lady from the carriage, which lady rushed into Lizzie's arms, and indulged in an outburst of female affection, and was carried off up-stairs.

Mr. Walton came into the drawing-room.

"Eh! Horry, did you see your cousin?"

"I saw a grey dress and a pair of boots."

"She'll wake you up, my boy. She's what I call a live woman. None of your languid, sentimental airs about her."

"Strong-minded!" gasped Horace.

"Yes; not vulgar or coarse—but with a strong mind in the highest sense of the term."

The entrance of the ladies put an end to the conversation. Horace rose to acknowledge, with his own easy courtesy, the introduction to his cousin, Miss Iva Marshfield. She was tall and graceful; but there was a flash in her eyes, a tremor of her lip, that spoke of energy, life, and buoyancy.

"Two stirring women," he said, mentally, as his eyes travelled from his new cousin to his stepmother.

Her bow made, Miss Iva sat down beside her aunt, holding her hand and petting it as if the bond of love between them was strong and true.

"Are you tired, Iva? Travelling all day is rather fatiguing."

"All day! Why, I have been travelling since the first of last month."

"How wearisome!" said Horace.

"I do not find it so. I like variety, motion, and changing objects of interest, and I find all these in travelling."

"But the dust, the heat, the bad hotels, the thousand annoyances!" persisted Horace.

"Now you are laughing at me," said Iva, pleasantly.

"I know these are the complaints which most women make, and subject themselves thereby to the sarcasm of gentlemen; but I am sure to find pleasure enough to make me overlook such annoyances. Ask Mr. Walton, who found me travel-worn and dusty, if I made him suffer for my discomfort."

"Suffer!" said Mr. Walton, heartily. "I never enjoyed a ride more than the one we have just taken—except," he added, as he caught sight of his wife's up-lifted finger, "except a few others."

"Never mind!" laughed Lizzie. "It's all in the family."

Miss Marshfield had been with her aunt for more than a fortnight before the expected lecture assailed Horace. He had watched, with an interest that astonished himself, the active girl, as she found in that quiet country-seat a thousand object of daily interest. She was never idle, and he admired, while he still languidly condemned, the overflowing energy which made the veriest trifle important as long as it was an object to be gained, or a use to be fulfilled. He wondered to find himself riding, driving, walking, with an actual enjoyment of the exercise. He would, with a sort of comical inward protest, rise slowly from his chair, to turn music-leaves, gather flowers, or hand chairs, and, instead of sinking back, exhausted with the effort, would stand obediently by his cousin, interested, and conversing with his habitual drawl, yet with a relish that was as pleasant as it was novel. Yet, even with this unwonted exertion of his powers, he gave his cousin a feeling, first of contempt, then, as she found his mental powers develop, of pity for talents and opportunities rusting in inactivity.

He was stretched lazily on a rustic bench in the shade of a noble elm-tree, when he saw her coming, with her usual light, springing step, in at the gate. She must pass him, and he felt disinclined to rise; so he closed his eyes. She came beside him, but instead of passing, she stopped. He heard her low breathing, and felt that she was looking into his face. Suddenly, as if by an irresistible impulse, she spoke in a whisper, yet with passionate energy:

"Oh! that I could rouse him! Such a man must be meant for good!"

Something in the words and accent startled him, and he looked up. To his surprise, his gay cousin's eyes were full of tears. Seeing that he was awake, she would have passed on, but he put out his hand and stopped her.

"Stay," he said, sitting up. "It is cool and pleasant here in the shade, and I am sure you have no urgent call."

"And you," she said, abruptly, "have you nothing to do but dream away your life here?"

"Is it not a pleasant way to kill time?"

"Oh, Horace!" she said, earnestly, "was time given for no holier, no higher purpose than to kill? Have we no aim in life beyond getting rid of the time given us for the use of others as well as ourselves? Every hour, every moment must, in eternity, be accounted for, and how can we answer, if we have had our treasure of time only to waste and kill it?"

Her face flushed with earnestness, and her large eyes softened, as she looked almost imploringly into his face.

"Go on," he said, bitterly.

"No, I have offended you. Forgive me, I forgot that I had no right to speak so."

"You make the blow sharp," he said, half-impetuously, "when you apologize for a friend's advice by hinting that you take no other interest in the matter. I am not offended, Iva. I have long felt that I was useless, but never till you spoke have I thought there was such high responsibility as you speak of. What shall I do?"

His tone was strangely humble, and the warm tears filled Iva's eyes as she answered:

"Take the youth, health, strength, and talent given you, and use it in His service."

"Be a minister?" he asked, puzzled.

"Are there not many ways, in your path and mine, Horace, in that of every man, to do good, to aid the suffering, to comfort the afflicted, to make of time a use we may not blush to name when called to answer for it?"

"Iva, you positively frighten me! What can I do? I have no gift for preaching."

"Don't laugh at me, cousin!"

"I don't. I was never more in earnest in my life."

"Have you no profession?"

"Oh, yes! I am Dr. Walton, if I claim my title; but the diploma awarded me is the only proof of my medical skill. I never sought or found a single patient. The fact is, Iva—now, I ain't trying to appear good, I assure you—I found that there were so many men whose profession was their living, that it seemed unfair for me, who do not need the money, to take the practice of one patient from those who needed it."

"But, Horace, there are thousands of cases that pay nothing, where a man may give his skill in a good cause."

"Gratuitous practice! All the students get some of that. Horrid bore, cousin—poking into dirty little alleys, smelling of onions and fish, to tend *delirium tremens*, or wives beaten to a jelly by drunken husbands—the practice varied by babies with sore eyes, and children of larger growth, sick from foul air or dirt. Faugh! the very recollection is sickening!"

"Yet it is just such cases we are bidden to minister to," she said, gently. "Think of one of these little ones restored to health, saved from its miserable life to be placed in some country home, or at some trade, to become an honest man, instead of growing up feeble and vicious. And, think, if you could say, hereafter, in such a case, 'It is my work!'"

"You don't know what it is, Iva."

"I have passed hours each day, since I was fifteen years old, in just such homes. My aunt Katie is a visitor of a benevolent society, and she has taken me on every visit for the last four years."

Had it no effect, this earnest, wistful conversation? A month passed away, and Horace was outwardly the same as ever. Iva had put her whole heart into her one endeavour to rouse him, and she sadly thought her trial a failure. Her cousin shut himself up for hours now in his own room, and she, thinking it was done to avoid her, kept from him.

A cry of terror rang over the land. A fever had broken out with fearful violence, and piteous appeals went out from the devoted city for aid and comfort in her sore affliction. And physicians went forth, their lives in their hands.

Horace Walton, said, as he stood in the drawing-room, surrounded by those he loved.

"I am going."

"Horace!"

The cry burst from every lip.

"I have been reviving my old medical knowledge, The need is great. Let me go, father."

"Go, my boy, and God guard you," said his father.

"Lizzie?"

"Oh! Horace, take my prayers too," she said, bending down, as he knelt to kiss her.

Last of all, he stood before Iva. She was fearfully pale, but she did not sob or speak.

"Iva," he whispered, "If I return, I shall come to you for my reward." And he was gone.

Many were the lives sacrificed for the devoted city, yet there was one who shrank from no danger, who faced every peril, who was tireless for good, earnest in well-doing, yet who came home, after the fury of the plague had spent itself, pale and weary, yet roused for life from his dream of idleness. One, who, with a new purpose, lives now, keenly conscious of lost time to be made up, lost opportunities regained, yet who lets nothing paralyze, but all stimulate him to new exertions.

And by his side, his helpmate in truth, his loving guide, yet submissive wife, is the high, pure-souled woman who first roused him, and proved that, save where his own life is vain and useless, no man can be "dreadfully bored."

M. E. C.

CAPTAIN M. F. DUCANE, R.E., who has had considerable experience in the Convict Department, Western Australia, has been appointed Inspector of Military Prisons, and a Member of the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons.



[JOHN PRESENTS THE RESCUED ADA TO CAPTAIN MURRAY.]

VIOLETTA.

By PERCY B. ST. JOHN,

Author of "Quadrona," "Bythe Hall," "Photographs of the Heart," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXI.

But who and what art thou
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
And what are these to thine or thee
That thou should'st either pause or flee?

He stood—some dread was on his face,
Sour hatred settled in his place.
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient Anger's hasty blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed,
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook, his hand on high.

Glow.

JOHN PERCIVAL, the disinherited, clutched the arm of Edward Stacey with an energy which very nearly elicited a shriek from his fellow-officer, who, however, by an almost superhuman effort, restrained himself, and prepared to listen to the decisive scene of all.

The position was one of unusual danger, even in the adventurous life of an English sailor, the most fearless and gallant of beings in the world.

But neither knew any fear. There are moments in the life of most children of Adam, when the senses are so completely absorbed by one idea, that all mere personal considerations become as nothing.

Death had no terrors for them, should they even be discovered.

But with the admirable faith and sublime devotion of love they counted not on failure but success.

The Pasha still smoked his pipe in silent contemplation, while Ada, all but insensible, was supported in the arms of two black slaves. His little red ferret eyes were fixed upon her half in anger, half in admiration.

He had seen her accidentally, had taken a sudden and strange fancy to her, and, despite the custom of not interfering with the rayahs, had risked everything to gain this toy of an hour, whose very existence, perhaps, he might ignore in a week.

"Well, daughter of an accursed infidel, what is it ails thee?"

The Pasha had resumed his dignity, and spoke in the Turkish dialect.

The slaves bowed submissively, and intimated that the Christian girl "spoke no Turkish."

"Fetch Selina!"

That beauty, who unnoticed by the Pasha, stood near the door, advanced with a voluptuous and co-

quettish smile, to where the enthroned tyrant lay on his luxurious divan.

"Your slave awaits your bidding," she said, with a graceful and submissive bow.

"How came you here?" said the Oriental, with the suspicion of his race.

He himself was a slave who had risen to rank and power by means of the most nefarious character.

"I thought your highness would require my services; the girl speaks no language but English or French."

"Tell her that I have honoured her by my regard, and that if she will be but smiling and agreeable her lot is cast in Paradise for ever."

As Selina bowed her head, a smile of mingled scorn and hate flashed across her countenance. She was about to offer some consolation to Ada when she saw the eyes of the Pasha fixed upon her, with a mingled expression of cunning and curiosity.

She took Ada, therefore, by the hand, and translated the Pasha's words into French.

A twinkle of the cunning Mahomedan's eye told her that she was understood.

She mentally thanked her star that she had thus been illumined—one false step and all was lost.

Ada made no reply, but continued to sob violently.

The squat figure of the Pasha moved about uneasily, and his little eyes were rolling wildly in his head.

"What ails the girl," he cried; "let her speak, or the sack and a plunge in the harbour shall rid me of her for ever. I have had enough trouble with her, to be spared this whining."

Selina bowed humbly, and taking the trembling girl's hand in hers, again repeated the Pasha's words.

At the end of the sentence she added words of her own.

"Be calm—friends near."
She had not made love to an Irishman for nothing—she had learned his language.

Heavily droops the tender flower beneath the scorching rays of a summer sun; every leaf is as dead, every petal shows signs of dissolution, the colours are dim and vapid, when a cloud appears in the sky, a cooling breeze arises, and a genial shower refreshes all nature, and not least the dying flower, which raises its head, renews its colours, and becomes at once fragrant and beautiful.

So Ada.

In that den to which she had been entrapped in so infamous a manner, she was utterly at the mercy of an Eastern despot and his satellites, who knew no will but his.

She was shut out from hope, from love, from justice—death her only chance of escape.

But the magic word friend had been pronounced, and

her eyes opened, her cheeks showed something of their old lustre, though her look was still languid and alarmed.

"Friends—where?" she asked, wildly clutching Selina.

"What says she?" asked the Pasha.

"She is timid; the presence of so many —," began Selina.

"Begone!" cried the old voluptuary, with a menacing gesture.

The black slaves retired, and their retreating footsteps were soon heard in the distant corridor.

"Kneel!" said Selina.

The young girl, almost instantly relapsing into her former terror, was about to do so, when a glance at the Pasha filled both her and her companion not only with astonishment, but almost with terror.

The amorous prince, whose face was an instant before all smiles, was now hideous to look at. His face had turned livid, his eyes rolled in their orbits, and though 'twas plain he strove to speak, his tongue refused its office.

Selina caught Ada by the arm, and whispered quick: "Not a word, or we are all lost."

She then sprang to the door and bolted it.

Ada closed her eyes and waited for the first friendly sound from those who were said to be her friends.

But for a moment or two not a syllable was uttered.

To explain the abject terror of the Eastern Viceroy it is necessary to revert to a practice which of itself is enough to show the barbarous and sanguinary character of our great allies the Turks.

It is but one amid others equally or far more abominable.

When the Sublime Porte thinks proper to change its governors of provinces, it is, or rather was, the custom to send to the deposed ruler a messenger with a firman and a bowstring. Instead of giving retiring pensions to the great officers of state, they strangled them. It saved much trouble and certainly much cash.

Besides the property of such individuals went into the coffers of the Sultan.

Now, when John Percival and Edward Stacey suddenly appeared from their place of concealment, the first idea which struck the Pasha was that he was about to suffer according to the ancient custom, which, we believe, is even still secretly practised, despite alliance with civilized European powers.

You may dress an ourang-outang like a gentleman—the beast will remain.

It was the hopelessness of escape which rendered the Pasha speechless. Men in his position have resisted the mandate, and been continued in office, from regard to this very proof of energy.

But Hussein Pasha was a worn-out voluptuary and debauchee—a martyr to raki, brandy and champagne—the favourite liquors of those who are forbidden to taste wine by the Koran—and to offer any opposition to the Sultan was utterly out of the question.

"Wallah!" he muttered, and shutting his eyes, resigned himself to his fate.

John made a sign to Selina to approach, and while they held his arms, they whispered to her to gag him.

Quick as lightning the victim of his power and wealth thrust a veil into his panting mouth, and, tying a scarf over it, effectually prevented all danger of an outcry.

Now it was that a faint suspicion of the truth crossed his mind, and springing up suddenly he almost released himself, while with glaring eyes he stared at the dark and menacing countenance of Selina.

John, however, placed the point of his dirk at his throat.

"Villain!" he said, in a low, hushed whisper, speaking in Lingua Franca, "one more such struggle and your death shall be the forfeiture. Be still, and no harm shall be done you."

The Pasha spoke not. His gaze was fixed on Ada, who now stood upright without any support, her lips just parted, her hands raised as in amazement, and her eyes fixed on the Englishman, who stood before her in the garb of a Greek. But she did not move.

John and Edward now proceeded effectually to prevent any movement on the part of the Pasha, whom they laid upon his couch.

Still his eyes were open.

John now advanced towards the young girl with a rapturous glance.

"Tis he!" she cried, and flew to his arms.

Now this may be considered by certain young ladies, brought up in boarding-schools—a class of young ladies who notoriously never do wrong—and by censorious and moralisers generally, as very bold and hoydenish on her part.

But let us defend the warm-hearted young girl. We are sure all our male readers will require no defence, on the score of her years, the country, and above all, the situation.

Here was a young girl of fifteen, bred in the semi-savage isles of Greece, who, the day before, had been warmly interested in the fate and fortunes of the young Englishman, and carried away by brutal violence from all hope of again gazing upon any she loved or cared for—found herself suddenly released from the ferocious grasp of a monster she hated. What wonder then, if in the first exuberance of her thankfulness and gratitude, she went a little beyond what strict etiquette allows, or a schoolmistress might have suggested.

It was an impulse of the heart, one of those virgin emotions of the soul—worth every fuss of thanks, or words of any kind.

And then John Percival was so handsome, the Pasha so ugly.

John pressed her wildly to his heart.

"My life! my soul! my Ada!" he whispered, "and have I saved you. You were his—now you are mine. No one in the world could dare dispute you with me."

"Eless you!" said the innocent girl, gently disengaging herself, and looking with the deep confidence of early love into his eyes; "and is it you have saved me?"

"Yes, I came here to free you, or die," he answered.

"This must end," said Selina, in a low whisper. "Every minute is precious. The slightest mistake and all is lost. See that the tyrant's cords are secure—nay—one moment."

She stood before him in all her queenly beauty, gazing with ineffable scorn on the prostrate form of the furious viceroys.

"Pasha," she said folding her arms and looking with hatred in every feature at him, "know thyself. What woman, not thy slave, could love so hideous, old, and brutal a tyrant? Not one. You buy us—and to be well fed, and clothed, rather than to perish, or become menial slaves, we feign to love thee! Not one ever did. On our lips smiles, in our eyes love, in our hearts hatred and loathing. In my country, where no man can have more than one wife, we too, are often purchased by the gold, or title, or power of one of the opposite sex. But we never love him. To keep up appearances, to save our pride, to prevent misery—outward misery—in the household, we too pretend to affection. But the coerced woman never does—she can neither love a master nor a purchaser. Her life, then, is one mighty struggle against the native emotions of the heart or one stupendous sin. To love is our nature—and when one man has our hate, 'tis as certain as the sun shineth that another has our love. What, then, could you expect but hate? You buy us in the market with money—you take fifty loathing wives to your arms; you, whose touch is pollution, and you expect affection. No, we bow the knee, but we give thee hate and scorn. Don't think I have passed the nine years of my seclusion here without some one to love. Ha! ha! ha! Do you think any of us do? Shall one old man rule thirty beautiful girls and not be outwitted? See what has happened

to-night—from this judge what happens every night, and will again. I go—I have had my revenge."

It was well for her that eyes could not kill, or he had slain her by a look. Never did Turk before so have his beard defiled and no hope of revenge. But yes he could—the rest of his harem remained.

Selina started and laid her hand upon her wildly beating heart as she caught a glance of his sinister eye, the meaning of which she understood too well.

"Take me away," she muttered, "fancies have made me mad. This way."

And followed by the horrified and astonished group, she darted beneath the arras, and following the dark passage, speedily reached her own chamber.

Her slaves had retired. It was empty.

Kneeling down, she opened box after box, and took out all her jewellery, which was of great value, though a large portion was false—the real having passed into the hands of Ogloo Aga.

She then made up a bundle.

"Follow—speak not a word—leave all to me, I answer for everything with my life."

John supported the trembling form of Ada, while Edward gallantly offered his arm to Selina, who took it, and concealing her bundle under her ample burnous, leaned, as it were amorously, on his arm.

By her advice, Ada had also assumed the white cloak without a seam.

Both were closely veiled.

Treading with cautious steps and slow, they, however, soon reached the hall, where Baba, the black door-keeper, lay coiled up on his mat like a large Newfoundland dog.

A gentle pressure of the arm awoke him. The negro was too well-bred, probably too well paid, to exhibit the least surprise.

"The night is hot, Baba, and 'tis dangerous to talk indoors, we would cool ourselves in the orange grove," said Selina, raising her veil, and showing her pearly row of teeth.

The negro smiled, gazed with admiration at her beauty, sighed, and took the three or four gold pieces she offered him.

He then opened the door and prepared to wait for their return.

"Do these men never abuse their power," said Stacey, in a hesitating tone.

"Never," replied Selina, with a stern emphasis which haunted his memory for many years after.

They were in the open air. The night was still dark, and the palace lay in some obscurity. The lights were nowhere extinguished, but curtains and shutters concealed their brilliancy.

But Selina never hesitated a minute, and in a very few minutes they were nearly at the end of the garden. Suddenly all halted and darted into the deep shadow of the trees.

A man's figure stood, tall and menacing, in the pathway before them.

"St. Patrick!" said John, as if suddenly inspired by an idea.

"By the powers!" replied Ogloo Aga; "and is it you, my boy; all's up, I suppose? Why, mother of mercy! shure and ye've got two on 'em; one apiece! Ooh! this is rare burglary; but come along, me hearties—we've no time to lose."

"Tis Selina," whispered John.

"Eh! what?" cried the Irishman, but not in the most rapturous accents.

"With a whole fortune of jewels," again whispered John, who suspected that the great love was chiefly on one side.

He was partially mistaken. The Irishman was attached to her, but his one engrossing idea was liberty.

"And is it you, Selina, *me chere*?" he said in French.

"Take my arm. The door is open. Follow," he added, addressing John; "and faith, though I'd like to know how you did it—why, I've too much regard for my head to stop here."

None were inclined to answer. The bushes were pushed aside, the secret door passed, the door closed, and the whole party safely entrenched behind the walls of Ogloo Aga's house.

"And now, my hearties, not a minute is to be wasted. We'll be food for crows in the morning if any mother's son of us is found on this ground. The English consul couldn't save us—barring he's not an Englishman, but a mighty bad Maltese."

A short conference ensued, during which coffee was brought up by the old woman, and then, Biddy included, the whole party sallied forth, and without adventures of any kind, found themselves close to the hotel where they had dined that very day.

A body of armed men were drawn up in front of it.

They would have retreated—it was too late. In an instant they were surrounded.

"Och murder!" said Ogloo Aga.

"Why, Jack," cried a voice; "here's that ugly old coffee-pot dealer, a speaking English like Tipperary Jack himself."

"Silence, my hearties," said John, in as stern and

commanding tones as he could assume; "lead us to Captain Murray."

"Aye! aye! your honour," said the sailor heartily. "It's the lieutenant," whispered the men; and a suppressed murmur of delight and applause told how popular he was on board.

CHAPTER XXXII

The day at last has broken.

What a night

Hath usher'd it! How beautiful in heaven!
Though varied with transitory storm,
More beautiful in that variety!
How hideous upon earth! where peace and hope,
And love and revel, in an hour were trampled
By human passions to a hazy chaos,
Not yet reaching to separate elements.
'Tis warring still! And can the sun so rise
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,
And billows purpler than the ocean's, making
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,
So like we earnest deem it permanent:
So feeling, we can scarcely call it taught
Beyond a vision, 'tis so transiently
Scatter'd along the eternal vault, and yet
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,
And blends itself into the soul, until
Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch
Of sorrow and of love; which they who mark not,
Know not the reason where those twin genii
Who chasten and who purify our hearts:
So that we would not change their sweet rebukes
For all the boisterous joys that ever awoke
The air with clamour, build the palaces
Where their fond votaries repose and breathe.

Sardinian palat.

CAPTAIN CHARLES MURRAY was alone. There was a strange fire in his eye, as, with hasty strides, he hurried up and down the apartment he occupied in the hotel.

The strange woman had left him alone after a long and secret conference, which had moved the officer as he had not been moved since the days of his love passages with Eleanor Fontenoy.

He had seen the Pasha again that evening, and solemnly demanded the liberty of Ada, as a British subject; but had been met by all the cunning artifices and subterfuges of an Oriental.

On his soul, by the shade of the prophet, he knew nothing of the girl; but he would inquire—to-morrow—the next day.

"Tell his highness," said the English officer, who was pale with suppressed passion, "that if I day-break the girl be not restored to her friends, unharmed, I will search his palace—aye, his very harem—with my marines, and if any resistance be made, will bombard the town."

The grim Pasha heard the threat with a livid smile. He again wished that his beard might be defiled, if he knew anything of the girl, and broke up the audience. He then retired to his inner apartments, determined to have his revenge.

Ada should add to the list of his victims, and then perish in the waters of the bay—so that did the rude barbarian carry out his threat, no trace of her should be found within his palace walls.

Had this fearful resolve of the despot been known, it is doubtful if he would have escaped the summary vengeance of the outraged young English officers.

A large portion of the captain's anxiety had relation to John Percival, to whom, for five or six years, he had been a faithful guardian, and whose noble and manly nature had completely won his heart. Not that he did not wish Edward Stacey to escape—but his anxiety was less personal and parental.

"Rash boys!" he cried aloud; "to venture life and liberty within the lion's den."

The lady had communicated the secret of their design to him.

"And yet who knows—had I not the responsibilities of rank and office on me—I should have done the same myself. But the girl—the girl—will she escape this infamous trap? Will they, through bolts, and bars, and guards, be able to track her—and, if so, by what miracle shall they escape the ferocious anger of this Oriental tyrant? It racks me to the very soul."

And the gallant officer, as brave a man as ever boarded a vessel of superior force, or marched up to a battery grinning with cannon, wiped the cold perspiration off his face.

'Tis the most courageous who often are the most sensitive and tender-hearted; and as the good man is nearly always brave, so is the brave man nearly always good.

Suddenly there was a noise without—voices were heard—and a knock came to the chamber-door.

"Come in," said the captain, laying his hand upon his beating heart.

John Percival entered, followed by Stacey, Selina, Ada, Ogloo Aga, and even by Biddy.

"What means this intrusion?" cried the officer, angry to be disturbed by a mob of ruffianly Greeks.

From excess of caution, the young men had passed through the streets in their disguises.

"Come on board, sir," said John, touching his cap, and using a familiar phrase.

"John, my dear fellow," cried the delighted captain; "is it, indeed, you? What success?"

John took the veil from Ada, and led her forward—blushing, and with downcast eyes.

Charles Murray stole one glance at her, and then, turning abruptly away, asked:

"And who are these other parties?"

"I am Stacey, sir," said the young officer, smiling; "and allow me to present to you, Mr. and Mrs. Timothy O'Rourke."

"The captain stared.

"It's all true yer honour," said the supposed Ogloo Aga, with a low bow, "this is Timothy O'Rourke himself, and mighty glad to part with his turban and slippers; and this is Mrs. O'Rourke that is to be—now Mademoiselle Selina Delcour, late of his highness's harem."

"Tell your story quickly," cried the officer, whose eager and wondering glance stole so often towards Ada, that John began to be uneasy.

He therefore, in a few brief phrases, explained how they had rescued the girl.

"From the jaws of the lion, truly," said the captain, who had listened with deep emotion, "but now not a moment is to be lost."

He rang a bell. A Greek domestic appeared.

"Tell the lady who has just retired to rest I wish to see her."

"Without taking any further notice of his guests, Captain Charles began walking up and down the room with hasty strides.

In another moment the Greek lady entered the apartment, and caught Ada in her arms.

"What did I promise?" said John, with one of his most fascinating smiles.

"Aye! young man, you have nobly redeemed your word; but your reward shall be great. As far as I have the power to give it—take the hand of Ida."

"Silence!" cried the captain, sternly, "this is no time for love speeches, or marrying, or giving in marriage. You can talk of that when you meet again."

"Meet again!" cried John.

"Meet again!" repeated Ida.

"A vessel—a Greek barque, sails at daybreak for Alexandria. Those who wish to escape the vengeance of the Pasha will sail in her—will go on board at once. At Alexandria they can wait for the steamer, and go rid Marseilles to England. Lieutenants Percival and Stacey will return at once to their duty."

John was struck dumb with astonishment. It was not only the sentence of separation, but the cold and stately tone of the commanding officer, that struck him to the heart.

Even the Greek lady looked surprised, while Ada's tears flowed apace.

Captain Murray opened the door, and called loudly for Stopford, the coxswain of his own boat, who immediately appeared.

"Take these ladies on board the Hellenes," he said, "and bid the captain set sail at once. He has my full directions. Ladies, adieu—may we meet in England shortly."

"Captain Murray," said John, touching his cap.

"Mr. Percival."

"May I escort the ladies to the beach—no further?"

"Certainly not, Mr. Percival, I have other duties for you. Bid your friends adieu in my presence, and then, if you value their lives, let them go."

John moved proudly away from his commanding officer—usually so kind and considerate—now so stern and uncompromising—with difficulty restraining tears of rage and mortification.

"Ada," he said in earnest and passionate tones, "we part but to meet again. As soon as my duty will permit, I will throw up my commission and follow you to England."

"You will find us easily," said the Greek lady, while Ada, her heart full to breaking, held out her hand and shook his warmly.

"Infatuation," cried the captain, speaking to himself.

"Now ladies, there is no time for delay. Too late!"

Loud cries and shouts were now heard in the streets, the ladies were hurried out of the hotel, and escorted by the whole party of marines, made the best of their way to the beach. Not a light was carried by any of the party.

Lieutenants Percival and Stacey will remain with me to face the enraged Pasha, or his agent," said the captain, coldly.

The young officers bowed and stood erect beside their superior. They were not many minutes left in expectation. The chief adviser of the Pasha, one Mustapha Bey, leaving his motley crew of slaves, torch-bearers and guards outside, entangled, followed by two or three civilians.

"To what do I owe, at this late hour of the night, this extraordinary intrusion," asked the imperturbable English officer.

"Most honoured representative of her most sublime Majesty Queen Victoria, greatest of potentates, we

hasten to inform you that his all-pervading highness Hussein Pasha is among the blessed in Paradise."

"Dead?" cried Captain Murray.

"Dead!" repeated Mustapha.

Percival and Stacey looked at one another in horror and amazement.

The polite representative of her Majesty, here, despite the hour, rang for pipes and coffee, which the accommodating Greek landlord at once supplied, and then requested of the chief minister, an explanation of the tragedy. But he knew very little of what had happened.

For some time after the departure of the fugitives, the Pasha lay motionless. His rage, humiliation and fury, so overwhelmed him, that all thought of rescue was out of the question.

After a little while, however, the idea crossed his mind that the authors of his dishonour and disgrace were escaping. At once the wily Oriental calmed down the exuberance of his passion, and determined to attempt freeing himself from his toils.

It was a much easier task than he had anticipated. Though his mouth remained gagged, his feet, on his commencing a struggle, were found to be so fastened as gradually to loosen. After some ten minutes, then, of great exertion, he found himself able to rise—his hands still tied, and his tongue unpleasantly fast.

He, however, advanced to the door, and commenced a series of such violent kicks that, in a few minutes the panels of the door gave way, and one or two guards and black slaves came tumbling headlong through—to stand stock-still with surprise, and, probably secret delight, at the prospect of their tyrannic master—gagged and bound.

One or two vigorous kicks from the infuriated Pasha soon brought them to their senses, and, no sooner was his tongue loose, and his arms free, than drawing his sword, he thus addressed them.

"Beasts! pigs! infidels! glaucous! slaves! Is it thus you defile the beard of your master? but I will have revenge. All Turkistan shall ring with the story. If I am insulted and betrayed my vengeance shall be terrible. Call up my guard, call up my women; let not one be absent."

The terrified blacks hurried to obey, and the Pasha remained alone a moment or two to adjust his costume. Even at that moment he feared to lower his dignity in the eyes of his guards or women.

This movement of perhaps not unnatural vanity, had terrible consequences.

Having adjusted his head-dress, fixed his pistols in his belt, and replaced his sword-belt in its proper place, the great Pasha, with lowering bow, flashing eyes, and his very beard curling with rage, strode towards the hall where the dancing had taken place that evening.

The women were all collected.

With eager eyes, and light but hurried tread, and bosoms, arms, and ankles glancing, they came, and formed themselves in a semicircle, of which the three wives—the fourth, Selina, was absent—formed the centre.

The guard, some dozen or more in number, formed the centre.

"So!" cried the enraged viceroy, at once entering upon his subject. "This is the way my beard is defiled. You admit Christian men to these apartments, you have lovers, you the wives of the descendant of the Prophet. You laugh at your husband, and think to go unpunished. One has owned her guilt and betrayed you all. Women, know your fate, you die—one and all, and such shall be the fate of every dog of a slave who has connived at my dishonour."

And here, foaming at the mouth with rage, he drew his sword, intending, like Peter the Great, to be his own executioner.

"Most high and mighty prince," began Zuleima, a ripe and lofty beauty of some seven-and-twenty summers, "we are ready to die, but let me, your first and dearest wife, say what can be urged in our defence."

"Speak!" said the old man, waving his sword wildly on high, and by his glaring eyes, and parched lips, showing the fire that consumed him.

"Coffee," said Zuleima, clapping her hands.

Coffee was brought, the Pasha eagerly swallowed a cup, and sank on a couch to listen.

His face was more livid than ever.

"Most high and mighty prince," began his first and favourite wife; "do you think that we, thirty or more, beautiful girls, are content to be the slaves of a hideous old man? No! Selina has doubtless told the truth. We do hate you, and in the pleasant society of younger and handsomer men, compensate ourselves for the hideous penance of the harem. I a

* Such tragedies were common. Byron tells us, and we could quote hundreds of authorities:—"A few years ago the wife of Mustapha Pasha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity. He asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in the Zennina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night. One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror at so sudden a wrench from all we know, from all we love."

wife?—why, the greatest sovereigns of civilized states have but one. We are not so ignorant as you think. You admit amongst us slaves from France and Italy, and they tell us of lands where women are free to choose their masters, and free to leave him he cruel. Think, then, if we, knowing this, do not hate the hideous prison to which you commit us—and now, old man, that you know the truth, kill us."

"Kill, slay!" cried the infuriated tyrant, hitherto spell-bound, rising, and falling back upon his couch. "Ah, poisoner!—I am dying. Guards—kill—slay—let me see them all perish before I die."

But the guards moved not. They saw that in a few minutes their master would be unable to punish them, and they at once sided with the victorious party.

It was true. Whether rage had brought on a fit of apoplexy, or whether in reality the wife, warned by the black slaves, had poisoned the coffee, can never be known; but in a few minutes more the Pasha was dead, and the women and guards plundering the harem. This done, they one and all fled, and being possessed of no small plunder, escaped, nor was one trace of them ever after found.

When the prime minister of the Pasha had concluded his tale, the captain gravely advised him to take the reins of power until the Sublime Porte could send a successor.

This was precisely what Mustapha Bey desired, and having elicited this opinion from the representative of England, he at once retired to take the necessary measures to have his power acknowledged.

Captain Murray now quietly discharged his bill, and went on board, followed by his young officers.

As they reached the deck, the flapping of a sail told them that the Greek barque was under weigh.

John Percival heaved a deep sigh.

"My dear John," said the captain, in a low tone of voice.

"Sir!"

"You are angry with your best friend; but if you will condescend to hear my explanation, you will see how you have misjudged me."

The two young officers stood respectfully, but firmly before their superior.

"You think I have been harsh in sending away yonder girl, and intend leaving the service to follow her."

"Such is my intention, Captain Murray."

"You shall have no coercion from me, but as the friend of Captain Jones, and of the late Sir John Percival, I thought it best to part you from the daughter of his amours."

"Ada—"

"Is the eldest daughter of Sir Reginald Percival!"

John fell senseless in the arms of Edward Stacey.

To be continued.)

A LIVE STURGEON AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

STURGEONS seem to have been very plentiful this year; but though we have seen numbers of them exposed for sale at the fishmongers, we have not till now had the opportunity of seeing one of these curious armour-bearing fish swimming about in the water.

Mr. Charles, of Arabella-row, Pimlico, having kindly informed me that he had a sturgeon alive on his premises, I called upon him, but found that he had sent the fish to the Zoological Gardens, where I at once proceeded. Mr. Bartlett has placed him in a pond made specially for the porpoise when he arrives, and which makes a capital abode in the mean time for the sturgeon. The water in the pond is fresh, not salt.

When I first saw him he reminded me of a large pike; he is about three feet long; but when he began to move a great difference in the style of swimming was immediately perceptible. The lower two-thirds of the body seem as elastic as india-rubber, and move about with a very graceful waving motion, not unlike the mode in which an eel may be seen swimming against stream. There is immense power in the tail, for he can dart about if he pleases with the velocity of an arrow, and can doubtless hold his own against a rapid current of water, a place where, barbel-like, he delights to dwell. When dead and in a shop the bony armour of a sturgeon seems stiff and unwieldy, but when he is in the water one sees how beautifully this armour fits him, and how it moves as easily and as gracefully as the tail of a salmon or trout. Our new arrival is dainty in his appetite, he will not touch earthworms or little fish. Having found that the contents of sturgeons' stomachs which I have dissected were principally comminuted portions of shells, we have determined to give him his choice of many kinds of water-shells, which will be placed at the bottom of his pond to eat or not as he likes.

He occasionally runs his body up on to the shelving margin of the pond, takes a great drink of air, and then "reining back" into the deep, emits great bubbles of air from his mouth and gills. He can also be observed to protrude, every now and then, his great telescope-like mouth, as though he was hungry and was in need

of refreshment. He seems in pretty good health, though he has a wound, just above his tail, caused by a rope; and I hope he will be good enough to live, and give us a chance of learning somewhat of his habits and customs, for his native home is so far down in the deep waters that we know very little indeed about him and his relations. Mr. Lord has a picture of "Indians spearing Sturgeons," which he exhibits at his "Home in the Wilderness;" he will doubtless be kind enough to enlighten us with some account of the sturgeon, as he has observed them in the rivers he has visited during the course of his hunting and fishing expeditions.—*Frank Buckland.*

THE SILVER DIGGER.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BARS OF SILVER.

THE first step proposed by the infuriated silver-digger, whose whole hopes in life had been wrecked by the exhaustion of the mine, and the robbery of the bars of silver, was the immediate exploration of the castle of Villaverde.

The extraordinary disappearance of the body of the robber-chief was a new source of terror to him.

There was no doubt that Villaverde and Maldonado being the same person, the immense store of wealth had been hoarded in the castle; but the sudden disappearance of the body certainly led to the supposition that he had again cheated death, and that he might yet live powerful and wealthy to wreak his vengeance on his enemies.

"What do you wish us to do," cried Captain Mion, after a fruitless search had been made for the robber-chief.

"Proceed to the castle."

"And there?"

"Make a search for the bars of silver. With them he might be a powerful enemy, without them we can despise him."

"Good," said Mion, as he lifted the form of Viva on a horse and leaped up after her. "Let us go at once, the scoundrel, badly wounded as he is, may yet outwit us. The devil seems to have befriended him and given him twenty lives."

The terrible excitement of the late conflict had so completely overwhelmed Viva's strength that she would have found it utterly impossible to have ridden alone; and even now she lay helpless on the saddle.

Captain Mion pressed her soft form to his heart and whispered words of love and hope to her as they proceeded towards the castle.

"Our troubles are nearly over, dearest Viva," he whispered as he kissed her warm lips; "you will soon be my own—my wife."

"Please Heaven it may be so," she murmured, "but yet I feel a dread—a terrible presentiment."

"Of what?"

"Of evil in the future."

"From whom?"

"From Maldonado."

"Oh! no—fear him no longer. He is dead; my thrust was strong and my aim at his heart was true."

"Where then is his body?"

"It has disappeared truly, but he is nevertheless dead. Some one of his men withdrew it, no doubt, for burial, or to prove to the band that he was dead. Oh, fear not, dearest Viva, he is no more, and will never again molest you."

Viva smiled brightly, but replied not.

From some reason or another, she could not share her lover's enthusiasm.

She had suffered so much from Maldonado—he had so many times threatened her hand and her life—she had so often been upon the verge of becoming his victim that nothing but the absolute certainty of his death could have made her happy.

He had seemed ubiquitous.

No matter how she was defended, no matter where she might be concealed, he had appeared to be able to discover her.

Nothing stopped him.

Bars and bolts he laughed at—natural and artificial obstacles he defied, and now even when the abyss was open to receive him he seemed to have paused on the very brink long enough to escape destruction.

For once Conrad Mion, much as he had feared Maldonado—well as he had appreciated his daring villainy—his unswerving courage, his omnipotent valour—for once, we say, Conrad Mion felt confident of his defeat.

Golden visions of a happy future aided in blotting out all fear.

He already imagined himself the husband of the beautiful girl, whose warm heart now palpitated against his own. He looked back with pride to the many terrible perils from which he had rescued her, and with ineffable joy to the peaceful home where his crowning bliss was to be realised.

It was far into the night when he was recalled to the remembrance of things more near to him by the voice of Senor Torre.

"We are near the castle now," said the silver-digger. "See yonder are its lights. What a triumph it would be to unearth the ruffian in his own den."

The road was very steep, and the troops and the miners, who followed in a sullen body after them, descended it with difficulty.

Halfway they made a halt, and as they did so, a bright glare shot up into the sky, which made the horses prance and start, and their riders blanch with fear.

What could it be?

For a moment all was uncertainty.

Then again a flash.

"Oh, Conrad!" cried Viva, as she clung closer to her lover's breast, "what fearful portent is this?"

Before he had time to reply the whole was solved in a manner which might least have been expected.

A tall, lurid, lapping flame rose upwards towards the still sky—then a column of black, dense smoke—then more flames, and a roar, as of distant thunder.

The Castle of Villaverde was in flames.

"His last refuge is destroyed," cried Captain Mion.

"And with it all my hope of wealth," shouted the maddened silver-digger, as he dug his spurs into his horse, and dashed wildly down the declivity.

"Follow me quickly," cried Mion, as he swept away in advance of the troops: "he will do some mad thing if not prevented. Come, dearest Viva, I will leave you at home, and then away to your father."

Long as the delay occasioned by this *detour* might be, Conrad deemed it advisable, as the presence of Viva at such a scene might only be a clog upon his movements.

Riding as rapidly as he did, however, it was not very long before he reached the house, at the door of which Enriqueta stood gazing in terror at the flames.

She received Viva with joy from the arms of her lover, and led her into an inner room; where, by means of kindly threats, she persuaded her to lie down and rest, promising to station herself at the house door and report the progress of the conflagration.

Meanwhile Conrad, after taking a parting embrace, dashed away towards the castle.

When he arrived there, he found that the fire had taken a goodly hold upon the premises.

Nothing was to be seen but huge beams swaying about in fiery tangles—lurid flames lapping the sky—myriads of sparks ascending towards the silent, starlit heavens—dense clouds of black obscuring them.

To save anything—to try and enter even was an impossibility.

Every door and window seemed, as it were, choked with flame and smoke.

From its foundation to its roof it was a thick, solid block of fire; and the spectators could do nothing but gaze helplessly upon it, withdrawing to a considerable distance to avoid the intense heat.

The spectacle was one of great beauty.

The very heavens seemed ablaze—the mountain peaks were rose-tinted—the trees covered with red blossoms—while the cross of the neighbouring church stood out boldly against the sky.

Senor Torre was nowhere to be seen.

"What has become of Senor Torre?" cried Mion, as Diego stood near him, his swaggering demeanour being considerably changed by the sublime sight before him.

"I know not," said the squire; "I saw his horse just now wandering alone. Perhaps he may have rushed into the flaming castle."

Mion shuddered.

"God forbid," he said, "if he is there, he has perished."

At this moment there was a murmur of alarm—nay, of horror, among the assembled troops.

A female form was seen at one of the upper windows of the castle.

It was Paquita.

Vainly she strove to find a retreat, vainly she shrieked, vainly she implored them to help her—no one could aid her.

At length, with a wild cry of terrific agony, she fell upon the floor, and the flames which her form had for a moment interrupted, burst forth in savage triumph.

"She is dead," said Conrad, solemnly.

As he spoke, a shadow crossed the large casement which overhung the doorway.

"She is escaping," cried Diego.

"No, no," cried Mion, "that is no woman's form, it is a man's, and even its shadow is familiar to me."

"What mean you?" said Diego, in complete wonderment.

"I mean it is Maldonado, the robber-chief, who is perishing in the tempest of fire, which no doubt his own hand roused. See, he approaches the window. Who can mistake him?"

He spoke truly.

The robber-chief it was, indeed, who approached the casement—dashed his head out, and glared wildly round him.

His eyes seemed starting from his head, his clothes

and his hair seemed to have been scorched by the action of the fire, and his whole appearance was that of a man in the last stage of madness.

Confident that upon a man in such a position no enemy, however inveterate, would fire, he crept out upon a broad ledge, and began crawling along.

At a sign from Conrad, the troops dispersed themselves into a single line, and surrounded the building.

Maldonado crept on.

Everyone held his breath.

He was a horrid wretch—a thief, and assassin; yet he was playing with his own life.

When he reached the angle of the building, he seized a piping which led up to the roof, and clambered hastily up it.

"Where can he be going?" exclaimed Conrad Mion; "below is safety compared with the certainty of death which awaits him above."

Diego shook his head.

"Remember Viva's story of the skeleton," said he; "the mason who built this castle is dead—his skeleton ere this is dust. Who knows but in this blazing edifice there may not be yet a way of escape?"

As he finished speaking the robber-chief had reached the summit.

He stepped upon the parapet with evident confidence, but once there he hesitated.

He had evidently reckoned upon safety, and was deceived.

A column of flame shot up and seemed to surround him—his form stood out black and terrible and majestic in its despair against the red back-ground for a moment; and then, with a wild cry of agony, he fell with the crashing roof, whose timbers dispersed themselves in a hundred blazing fragments in the night air.

"He is dead now," said Conrad Mion; "Viva will now at length be satisfied."

In a short time the fire was extinguished.

Its very fury destroyed it; for it had burned with such force that in two hours there was nothing left to destroy.

As soon as all was over—as soon as the smoke alone was left to mark the presence of a conflagration—Conrad dismissed his troops, after making a vain search for Senor Torre, and with Diego took his way towards Viva's home.

Their way led them along the road by the church, which stood solemnly, imposingly, silently on the hill, as if in calm rebuke of man's violence.

On the steps sat a man's form.

"See!" cried Diego, "there is Senor Torre, as I live!"

Conrad looked.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed; "yet—yes it must be." His surprise was natural.

That form which seem crushed by the weight of terrible woe—that man, whose pale face was surrounded by a wild tangled mass of hair—whose eyes appeared to be rolling in all the wildness of incipient madness—could scarcely, at first sight, be recognized as the bold silver-digger.

Yet it was he.

The tall cross-surmounted spire of the church pointed towards heaven in token of hope and faith; while he sat on the steps below it the very image of despair.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE GAMBUSINO.

SEÑOR TORRE having recovered from the lethargy of despair into which the loss of his wealth had thrown him, the time passed quietly and peacefully in the house of Senor Torre—more quietly and peacefully indeed, than it had ever passed since Viva's birth.

Her father appeared for a time to have relinquished his wild thirst for treasure-seeking and his overweening desire of power.

But it was not so.

His calmness was like the lull of the ocean before a storm.

He was only at rest because he meditated fresh plans. In his first schemes Viva had been the guiding star of his hopes—now she was a clog upon his schemes.

Finding her heart to be irretrievably given to Captain Conrad Mion, he assented with much seeming cheerfulness to their union, and on the evening on which we again enter into their home, it had been decided that the marriage should take place in a week.

Senor Torre, Mion, and Viva were seated in the parlour together, when the first-mentioned, suddenly turning to Conrad, said:

"My son, I shall have to leave you a greater charge than you, perhaps, imagine."

"What mean you, dear father?" asked Viva, smiling. "I mean, my child, that when Conrad marries you he will have to be your sole guardian. I shall no longer be with you."

"You are speaking in riddles," said Conrad, whose heart somewhat misgave him. "Pray explain yourself."

"I will," said Senor Torre. "They are now arrang-

ing at Puelva, a short distance hence, as you are aware, an expedition."

"A treasure-seeking expedition?" inquired Captain Mion, hastily.

"Yes."

"Ah, I feared so."

"Fear not, my son, it does not affect you."

"Yes, since it affects you it affects Viva, and through Viva, me," said Conrad Mion, warmly.

"Hear me out," resumed the old silver-digger. "Well, as I have said, an expedition is being fitted out at Puelva to explore the mountains forty miles in the interior. Near the spot which the leader of this expedition has fixed upon as his destination, is a rich mine of silver, hitherto unworked, but yet jealously guarded by a tribe of unfriendly Indians. To enable us to attack them with any degree of safety a well-armed force is required, and this force has already been prepared, and is only awaiting the arrival of the chief to set out. Well, knowing that my life has been devoted to the exploration of the country and the search after treasure, the leader of the party has resolved to avail himself, if possible, of experience in the guidance of the expedition."

"And have you accepted this perilous task?" asked Viva, eagerly.

"Not as yet."

"I trust you will not."

"I must be guided by circumstances, my child. I am every day expecting a person to visit me here, who will give me a more detailed account of the objects and resources of the expedition, and also explain to me the amount of reward which awaits me in the event of the success of the enterprise."

Conrad Mion had hitherto been silent.

He now spoke.

"And where have they obtained, in the first instance, the description of the mine?"

"From an old gambusino (treasure-seeker), who is well-known in the country, but whom, nevertheless, I have never seen. His name is Pedro."

Conrad sighed heavily.

"I should have thought," he said, that the perils and dangers which you have entailed upon yourself and those dear to you, by the insatiable thirst for treasure, would have been enough to prevent your ever making similar attempts. Indeed, the quiet life you have led of late, has induced us all to indulge in this hope."

The silver-digger shook his head.

"I thought," he said, "that I had deceived you. Yet it surprises me that it should have been so."

"And why?"

"Because the sudden possession of vast wealth after so many years of hopeless toil, and the sudden disappearance of this wealth have only succeeded in making me long the more eagerly for the acquisition of further riches."

He rose as he spoke and approached the door.

It was a soft and mellow evening.

Scarcely a breeze agitated the leaves. The glorious sun was dying—brilliantly fell its beams over forest and dale, mountain and river, and nowhere did it fall more brightly than upon the spot where the house of Senor Torre stood.

The old silver-digger stood gazing with feverish eagerness at the sloping road where he expected every moment to see approaching the figure of the man who was to lead him forth again into the perils and wonders of the wild.

Presently, amid the stillness of nature could be heard a footfall.

"He comes!" said Torre, as the form of an aged man crested the hill. "I must go in that I may not appear too eager."

Before we describe the interview between Torre and the stranger, we must give a rapid glance at the events which immediately preceded his arrival at the house of the silver-digger.

It was on the evening before that a man of some fifty years of age issued from an old house in Puelva, and took his way towards the market-place.

Here a mule was in readiness held by a lad who smiled derisively as the bent form of the old man approached. The mule, in spite of his asinine parentage, was of a somewhat skittish disposition, and it seemed ridiculous in the eyes of the boy to suppose that so decrepit a personage should attempt to ride him.

He was, however, strangely mistaken, for the old man, bent as he was, seemed endowed with peculiar strength, and leaped as lightly upon the mule's back as if he had been in the prime of youth.

Having done so, he flung a small coin to the boy, put his mule to a trot, issued from the town, and took his way towards the open country.

The house from which he had issued was a queer, old habitation, which had for some time been disused, but which was, nevertheless, habitable.

It was dark, gloomy, and dirty enough from long desertion; but in 1822, people in Puelva were not very superstitious. So, instead of avoiding it as a haunted house, they disliked it because it was unsightly and uninviting.

The fifty adventurers who had been gathered together by the exertions of their active chief—Limarez—found no place on arriving at Puelva so cheap and so well adapted to their purpose, as this old house. Here they would be beyond the reach of inquisitive people, and could moreover be together.

It was at this place that a meeting had been held, at which it had been decided to call in the aid of the silver-digger, Senor Torre, and none seemed more adapted for the post of ambassador than old Pedro, the gambusino.

So, amid the plaudits of the wild and lawless fellows, whom the hope of wealth had drawn together, the old fellow set out, determined by fair means or foul, as he laughingly said, to bring Senor Torre into their midst.

Not that he meant anything injurious to the life of Senor Torre.

No; his meaning was that, if necessary he would enlarge upon the resources and hopes of the expedition in order to win him over.

The gambusino was, as I have said, about fifty years of age, and rather bent; but his frame had been moulded in one of Nature's strongest moulds, and it was a hand of iron that wielded the light whip with which he impelled forward his sturdy beast.

By easy travelling he reckoned upon reaching the house of the silver-digger on the following evening; and accordingly as night set in he drew into the forest, tied his mule to a tree, took from his saddle-bags the wheaten cakes and dried meat which were to serve him for a supper, and lighting a fire to keep him company, sat down.

A man unaccustomed to a wild and adventurous life would have been appalled where the gambusino only felt at rest.

The forest scene was imposing.

The huge trees rose majestically on every side—the trunks losing themselves above in the thick foliage—the flickering light of the fire roused a thousand shadows, the breeze had a hundred voices and a hundred echoes.

But old Pedro having never wronged a fellow-creature sat quietly and peacefully by his forest fire, and almost nodded into sleep over his supper.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SHADOW BY THE FIRE.

SUDDENLY, as Pedro was half-dozing, dreaming of the wealth in store for his old age—thinking of a younger time of life when this wealth might have been of greater worth, the fire seemed suddenly extinguished.

He started up.

The fire was again there.

Pedro rubbed his eyes.

"I must have been dreaming," he said to himself. "Par Dios! but I could have sworn there was no fire!"

He looked round him.

Pedro was a brave man; but when one is caught napping, under any circumstances, it deprives one of confidence in oneself, and creates a certain degree of nervousness.

The rapid glance which he cast on all sides, however, seemed to satisfy him, for he re-seated himself, took out an old pipe, lit it, and began to smoke.

He had almost relapsed again into reverie, when a rustling of leaves and branches roused him.

He seized his carbine and started up hastily.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

"A friend!" said a voice.

"Advance, then, and be welcome!" returned the gambusino.

"Stay!" said the voice, "let me speak first. I am hungry, and therefore in want of a supper. Share with me, and I am your friend; refuse me, and I will shoot you from where I stand, and where I run no risk—therefore choose."

The gambusino laughed.

"You are a merry fellow," he said, "come to my fire, and welcome."

In another moment the strange man appeared in the full glare of the fire.

He was a tall, well-built fellow, much younger than the treasure-seeker, indeed, not more than five-and-thirty. Nature seemed to have been more kind to him than Dame Fortune, for though his face and form were of a goodly cast, his clothes hung about him in tatters, and his eyes glared above the hollow cheeks, as if food had long been absent from his lips, and was ever a rare companion.

Pedro shared with him his scanty meal, which he appeared to relish enormously.

It was not until he had eaten and drank that he spoke.

He extended his hand to the old gambusino.

"Friend," he said, "you are indeed welcome to my eyes. I have not tasted food for many days, and your hearty invitation and good supper have acted well, both on my body and my heart. How came you out in the forest?"

"I am bound up country, to Senor Torre," said Pedro.

"Senor Torre!" exclaimed the stranger, in some surprise.

"Yes—do you know him?"

"No—oh, no! But I have heard of him. Who, indeed, has not heard in some way or another of Senor Torre, the silver-hunter?"

"True!"

"And why are you going to him?"

"Well, I am going to seek his services as a guide. There is an expedition fitting out in Puelva—a treasure-seeking expedition, and he will be useful. I am going to him with a letter from our chief, asking him to return to Puelva with me and take the post of guide."

The man he was addressing mused a moment.

At length he said:

"Is there room for any one in the expedition. I am without home or friends, and would gladly accept such a position."

"I have no doubt if you go to Puelva and apply to Senor Limarez, mentioning my name, he will allow you to join. And now, my friend, as I must be early on my way, let us rest."

The gambusino then stretched himself on his cloak, and in a few moments was fast asleep.

The stranger, who had so oddly introduced himself, pretended to follow his example.

But it was pretence.

No sooner had the old man relapsed into a heavy sleep than he undid the folds of his ragged mantle, and crept towards him.

A devilish glee lit up the stranger's features as he approached the sleeper, who was lying on his face.

Then he drew a dagger and poised it in the air.

A noise startled the assassin, and caused the slumbering treasure-seeker to move uneasily in his sleep. The murderer trembled and crouched down.

Then again all was still—it had been a false alarm—only the sudden movement of Pedro's mule.

Once more the knife was raised. This time there was nothing to help, nothing to save. A glance of bright steel, a heavy, dull sound, a groan half-smothered, and all was over.

The treasure-seeker was dead.

The murderer turned him over, and placed his hand on his heart. There was no doubt—he was quite dead.

Having ascertained this satisfactorily, he proceeded to strip off his clothes, and take from him his letters and credentials. This done, he divested himself of his rags, and donned the decent, but by no means costly, garments of the gambusino.

Having completed this task, he proceeded to collect together some bark and leaves, and piled it over the dead body. This done, he undid the mule, leaped on its back, and proceeded at a rapid rate along the road.

In order to arrive at the time specified, it was necessary to give the mule a little rest, and having put the whole length of the forest between himself and the scene of his murder, he was about to fling himself down and sleep, when a sudden thought struck him.

"Par Dios!" he cried; "I had nearly outwitted myself. I must return to Puelva."

Then turning his mule's head he proceeded at a rapid rate towards the town.

So in the glow of the golden evening the old gambusino, whom Senor Torre expected, came slowly towards the house on his tired mule.

He alighted before the house and called out. Torre ran out as if he had not before seen him, and asked his business.

"I am Pedro the gambusino," he said, bowing courteously. "I come from Senor Limarez, of Puelva. I believe I have the honour of speaking to Senor Torre?"

"I am Senor Torre," replied the silver-digger.

"Welcome! Will you eat?"

He ushered the stranger in the room where sat Captain Mion and Viva, who regarded the new-comer with anything but friendly glances. Not that they had any personal feelings against him—that was impossible, since they had never seen him before, as far as they knew. They merely regarded him as the emissary of those who wished to take Torre again from his home—to awaken again in his breast the insatiable thirst for money, and the still more insatiable thirst for power.

The gambusino seemed surprised by the appearance of the young people.

"Ah!" he said, as he took the seat proffered him by Senor Torre; "I suppose that is your son and daughter."

"No!—my daughter this is, truly, but he is not yet my son."

"And they live with you?"

"Yes."

"Well," said the old man with a sigh, "if I had such a treasure at home and such a companion I should care little for treasures of silver elsewhere."

"I like this man," thought Viva, "he will persuade my father to remain at home."

"I am glad to hear you speak thus," said Captain Conrad Mion, "and I thank you for your words. In

my idea, Senor Torre has had enough of the perils of the day had been reported to the Russians by this peasant, who was in the employ of my host, and had long been mistrusted by him; and as the execution of spies is an essential condition to the safety of every one connected with the movement, the disagreeable necessity of hanging them is forced upon the insurgents against their inclination.—*A Visit to an Insurgent Camp, in Blackwood's Magazine.*

"I do not know," said the gambusino; "treasure-seeking has an undying charm to those who have once set their hearts upon it,—no matter what age they may be."

"You are right," cried Senor Torre, rising and approaching the door. "Enriqueta, let us have supper."

While supper was being laid—a supper consisting of wheaten cakes and rich fruits, the gambusino kept his eyes fixed upon the features of Viva, who sat talking in low accents to Conrad.

He seemed jealous, as it were, of being left out of the conversation.

Taking out his letters, therefore, he presented them to Senor Torre, saying:

"Before I eat a meal in your house, Senor, I may as well let you have your credentials." Then turning to Conrad Mion, he added: "I suppose Senor, with your beautiful bride here, you will not be tempted to join us?"

There was a tinge of sarcasm in his voice which displeased Conrad.

"You are right, Senor Pedro," he said, "nothing would tempt me to join a band of adventurers."

Supper being now ready, the four sat down, and conversation was interrupted for a time.

After supper the new-comer pleaded fatigue and asked to be shown to his room, which according to the rules of Mexican hospitality, he knew to be awaiting him. He took a courteous leave of all and preceded by Enriqueta went to his chamber.

Torre, Conrad, and Viva sat talking for some time after his departure.

Suddenly the weary girl started and pointed speechlessly to the window, which overlooked the road.

There, convulsed by demoniacal passion, could be seen a face.

It was that of Maldonado.

(To be continued.)

A HORSE was shot dead at East Linton Railway Station a few days ago. The shot had been fired from a distance of fully 600 yards by a young man. It was fired with the intention of striking a high wall a short distance away, but the piece having got too much elevation, the bullet rose, and on its reaching the ground again plunged into the body of the animal.

A SINGULAR SPECTACLE IN BATTLE.—At the battle of Stone River, while the men were lying behind a crest, waiting, a brace of frantic wild turkeys, so paralyzed with fright that they were incapable of flying, ran between the lines, and endeavoured to hide among the men. But the frenzy among the turkeys was not so touching as the exquisite fright of the birds and rabbits. When the roar of battle rushed through the cedar thickets, flocks of little birds fluttered and circled above the field in a state of utter bewilderment, and scores of rabbits fled for protection to our men, lying down in line on the left, nestling under their coats, and creeping under their legs in a state of utter distraction. They hopped over the field like toads, and as perfectly tamed by fright as household pets. Many officers witnessed it, remarking it as one of the most curious spectacles ever seen upon a battle-field.

A STONE has been successfully cut from the Cairngall Granite Quarry at Peterhead, which, according to the report in the district, is to form a tomb for the Prince Consort—on a smaller scale, but on the same principle, as the tomb of Napoleon at Paris—being placed on the floor of the vault, and not underground. The stone is ten feet long by about seven broad, and three and a-half deep; and it is to be cut into a sort of sarcophagus, to rest in a pedestal. Two cysts are to be cut in the stone for the insertion of coffins and lids left to be cemented down. The body of the Prince is to occupy one cyst, and we believe it is the express wish of her Majesty that her own remains shall be deposited in the other. The obtaining of this stone has been a work of extreme difficulty, one or two fine blocks having been already rejected for flaws. The stone weighs above eighteen tons, and will at once be conveyed to Mr. Macdonald's establishment in Aberdeen, to be dressed and polished.

RUSSIAN SPIES.—Next morning, as I crossed the yard to breakfast, I saw a poor woman sitting crying in the porch. I inquired of my host, who was cross-questioning her, what her distress arose from. She said that about midnight three insurgents had come to the door of her cottage and awoke herself and her husband; that he had got out of bed, when he was immediately seized, carried off between them to the edge of the wood, and then and there hung. And she added, weeping bitterly, "I know he must have done something very wrong to deserve it, or they never would have hung him." I was rather shocked at this piece of retributive justice, so promptly executed by my three young friends of the night before. It appeared that on their way back to camp, after dining with us, they re-

ceived undoubted information that the proceedings of the day had been reported to the Russians by this peasant, who was in the employ of my host, and had long been mistrusted by him; and as the execution of spies is an essential condition to the safety of every one connected with the movement, the disagreeable necessity of hanging them is forced upon the insurgents against their inclination.—*A Visit to an Insurgent Camp, in Blackwood's Magazine.*

It is reported that Messrs. Kupp, of Essen, in Prussia, the celebrated gun-makers, have received an order from the Russian Government for a number of muzzle-loading guns, of the heaviest description that can be manufactured, intended for arming the fortress of Cronstadt. These guns are manufactured of cast steel, and found to be much cheaper than when built up, or formed of forged iron.

MAN AND THE STREAMLET.

"WHITHER, merry little streamlet,

Hasthest thou, on silver feet?"

"I am hurrying to the ocean,

Hurrying ocean's waves to greet.

"I am but a little brooklet,

And I would a river be;

And I'm pushing onward,

Till my waters find the sea."

"But a rill the morning found thee,

O'er thy waves the flowers bent;

Canst thou not, ambitious streamlet,

Canst not be therewith content?"

Then the brook to me replying,

"How can man reprove the stream?"

Is not he for ever trying

To obtain ambition's dream?

"My pure waters, flowing onward,

Nourish flowers as they go;

You may trace each brooklet's pathway

By the flowers that round it grow.

"Ah, not thus with man's ambition,

Every path a desert shows;

Blackened ruins—desolation,

Follow him wheres'er he goes.

"When man's lot in life is humble,

Let him learn content to be;

Then reprove ambition's streamlets,

As they're hurrying to the sea."

R. L. W.

A DENSE growth of thrifty young forest-trees is rapidly springing up all over the treeless prairies of Illinois. This is owing to the fact that the land is now kept from the annual fall burning formerly practised by the Indians.

HOW TO LIVE LONG.—A venerable minister, who preached some sixty-seven years in the same place, being asked what was the secret of long life, replied, "Rise early, live temperately, work hard, and keep cheerful." Another person, who lived to the great age of one hundred years, said in reply to the inquiry, "How he lived so long?" "I have always been kind and obliging, have never quarrelled with any one, have eaten and drank only to satisfy hunger and thirst, and have never been idle."

BRITISH MUSEUM.—From the foundation of the Museum, in 1753, to the 31st of March, 1862, the sum of £3,389,177 has been expended upon its maintenance and in purchases for the various collections. The number of visitors to the general collections at various periods will serve to show the progress of the Institution. In 1805 the visitors were 11,989; in 1815, 34,409; in 1825, 127,643; in 1835, 289,104; in 1845, 685,614; in 1851 (the first Exhibition year), 2,627,216; in 1862 (the second Exhibition year), 895,077.

THE SCORPION.—The Algerines frequently amuse themselves by a curious kind of warfare, which is created by shutting up a scorpion and a rat together in a close cage, when a terrible contest ensues, which has been known to last an hour. It generally ends by the death of the scorpion first, and that of the rat in violent convulsions soon after. It is also a favourite diversion with the Moors, to surround a scorpion with a circle of straw, to which fire is applied. After making several attempts to pass the flames, it turns on itself, and thus becomes its own executioner.

PRINCE ALFRED AT THE FUNERAL OF A SEAMAN OF THE RACCOON.—On the afternoon of Friday week, shortly after leaving the Isle of Man, a seaman gunner, named William Keeler, fell from the main-top of the steam corvette Raccoon, and was killed on the spot, his skull being fractured. The ship reached Portsmouth on Monday, and it was decided by the captain, in accordance with the wish of the ship's company, that the body of the deceased should be interred in the Portsmouth Cemetery. A great amount of interest was excited among the inhabitants, it being understood that the officers of the Raccoon would attend in a body, and

that among them would be his Royal Highness Prince Alfred. The funeral procession started from the Dock-yard at two P.M. On arriving at the cemetery, Prince Alfred, who had preceded the funeral in a cab in company with his governor, Major Cowell, and the Rev. W. L. Onslow, chaplain of the Raccoon, joined the procession. His Royal Highness was in the undress uniform of a lieutenant. The consideration and good feeling exhibited by his Royal Highness has created a most favourable impression throughout the service.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR MODERN YOUTH.—The first thing that strikes one in mixing with young people now is the absence of that diffidence or timidity which has been supposed to belong to inexperience. There is in them generally, though in different degrees, what in the few may be called self-possession, but in the many must be called self-assurance. Afraid of nothing, abashed at nothing, astonished at nothing, they are ever comfortably assured of their own perfect competence to do or say the right thing in any given position. In schools, in universities, in military colleges, or in the world, wherever the young are assembled, these peculiarities are more or less conspicuous. Nor are they confined to the male sex alone. A girl of eighteen goes with as much assurance to her first drawing-room as the boy just out of school goes to meet his first introduction to his professional superiors.

DISCOVERY OF AN ANCIENT IRISH ORNAMENT.—We had the pleasure of examining at Mr. Donegan's establishment, Dame Street, an ancient Irish ornament wrought of solid gold, which was lately found by a poor man who had been working on the railway near Gorey, in the county of Wexford. It was a neck ornament, formed of what we might call a rod of gold, nearly half an inch thick twisted and weighs eighteen ounces and five pennyweights. It is remarkable only for its pure quality, and for the simplicity of its construction, and for its solidity. It was probably an ornament worn by an Irish king, prince, or chieftain, at a time when less solid workmanship was not fashionable. It is called a "tork," and does not differ much from others, which have from time to time been found in various parts of Ireland. But that its workmanship is of so plain a character, we should much regret that the poor man who found it had so little respect for antiquity as to cut it into eleven pieces, thus utterly destroying it as a work of ancient art.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has been pleased to accept a pair of Cornish choughs from a young Cornish miner named Thomas Mitchell, residing at Ferranzabulos. The birds were entrusted to the officials of the Cornwall Railway, and were safely conveyed to Marlborough House the same day. They were greatly admired by his Royal Highness, and, in the course of a day or two after, he very kindly inquired, through a gentleman residing in the neighbourhood, whether the donor was in such circumstances as to permit of any pecuniary compensation being made for his handsome present. On being informed that Mitchell was only a working miner, in receipt of very scanty earnings, and that he was the son of a widowed mother who had always maintained a respectable character in the neighbourhood in which she resided, his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to transmit, through his private secretary, a handsome gratuity, accompanied with his best thanks for the birds, and the information that they had arrived safely, were much admired, and were going on well.

YOUNG WILDLING OUTDOKE.—In the coffee-room at the Bush Tavern, Bristol, the conversation of the company touched on the subject respecting the real or imaginary existence of mermaids, when one of the party declared in favour of the affirmative: "Oh, real, beyond all doubt; I have seen seven or more at one time, the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld, with long black hair, and their young ones suckling at their breasts." The worthy and facetious host of the Bush replied, "Sir, Captain —, of the —, informed me that one Sunday morning a merman had suddenly appeared to his men, dressed in gray attire, with his hair frizzled and powdered as white as a full-grown cauliflower, and demanded to know if the captain was on board. The captain soon appeared on deck. The merman addressed him as follows: 'Sir, I shall feel particularly obliged by your giving orders for your anchor to be taken up, as it lies against my street-door, and prevents my family from going to church.'"

It is not generally known that there has existed for many years a ghost in Edinburgh, quite as startling as that of Professor Pepper, and produced, like it, by an optical freak. In the Vennel, a very steep and narrow road leading out of the Grassmarket, there is a church with a porch consisting of three arches before it. In the archway furthest down the street—and thus, from the steepness of the road, rather above the level of a person passing—a white figure stands every dark night. It represents a woman, in an old-fashioned coal-scuttle bonnet, and devoid of crinoline, and occasionally it has a slight swaying motion. The only requirements to see the ghost are, that it should be late enough for all the neighbouring window-lights to be

extinguished, and that the night should be a dark one. These conditions being got, it will startle any one considerably to see the weird figure for the first time, though upon investigation its origin is found to be most simple and harmless, being only the light from a lamp about thirty yards up the street, which enters the first arch at a sharp angle, and throws accidentally light of the shape described upon the wall, opposite the third arch.

FIELD-MARSHAL, LORD CLYDE.

WITHOUT surprise, but not without regret, the English nation has received the announcement of the death of one of its most distinguished men and bravest soldiers. Colin Campbell, Baron Clyde, in the fullness of honour and of ripe old age, has succumbed to the inevitable fat; and shortly after the hour of noon on Friday, the 14th of August, sank peacefully into that sleep, from which only the blast of the last trumpet will arouse him.

The life of Lord Clyde, or, as still more popularly and affectionately known, of Sir Colin Campbell, has now become history, and with the exception of that of the great Captain, who a few years since preceded him to the tomb, there are no pages in the annals of British glory that will trace a career more splendid than that which led the obscure Highland infant of October, 1792, through fields of triumph in almost every quarter of the globe, to the highest rank in the armies of his sovereign, and to a level with the noblest of the noble who surround her throne.

It is mainly as a soldier that we shall here speak of Lord Clyde; and, therefore, passing by the circumstances attendant upon the domestic incidents of his early youth, we find him in the summer of 1806, when in his sixteenth year only, gazetted to an ensigncy in the 9th Regiment of Foot. His first introduction to active service was in the Peninsula—and at Vimiera the young soldier won the earliest of those laurels that afterwards flourished so abundantly around his glorious path. He was with Sir John Moore in the fatal retreat at Corunna, and afterwards joined the Walcheren expedition, more productive of disease than of honour to the country; in 1809 he returned to the Peninsula, and was present at Barossa and Tarifa, and at the assault on St. Sebastian; in 1813 he received his first wounds. At the passage of the Bidassoa he was again wounded. After sharing in all the dangers and triumphs that led the British, step by step, from the shores of Portugal to the gates of Paris, we find the gallant soldier now a captain, wielding his sword in the service of his country in South America. In 1825 he attained the rank of major, and seven years later became Lieutenant-colonel. During the expedition to China in 1842, Colin Campbell was gazetted colonel, with the nominal rank of aide-de-camp to the Queen.

His next field of martial exploit was India, where, in 1848, he commanded a division under Lord Gough, and at the battle of Chillianwallah, in January, 1849, was again slightly wounded, and elicited high praise for his dauntless bearing before the enemy. At the decisive battle of Goojerat he commanded the same division, and in recognition of his services on that occasion, was distinguished with the rank of K.C.B. The Duke of Wellington pronounced the exploits of the 61st Regiment, led by Colonel Campbell on the day of Chillianwallah, to be among the most brilliant ever performed by any regiment in the British army.

Sir Colin Campbell was then appointed Brigadier-General to the late Sir Charles Napier, but soon resigned the post through disgust at the attempted dictation of the Governor-General's political agents as to the manner and time, &c., when he should fight; and returned to England, where he remained unattached until 1854, when he was appointed to the Highland Brigade in the army destined for the Crimea, and at the Alma and Balaklava, sustained the honours he had already nobly won.

His health required repose from the incessant fatigues of active service, and in November, 1854, he returned to England. After a short visit to his native country, he returned to his post in July. In the summer of that year he had been promoted to the rank of Major-General, and to the Colonelcy of the 67th Regiment of Foot. In 1855 he was nominated Grand Cross of the Bath, and in 1856 became Lieutenant-General. On returning from the seat of war he was presented with the freedom of the City of London, and created a D.C.L. at the Oxford Commemoration.

In June, 1857, intelligence of the Sepoy Mutiny in India, reached this country, and it was immediately felt that a commander of uncommon energy, and well tried ability was required to meet the exigency. Sir Colin Campbell was sent for to the Horse Guards, and in less than twenty-four hours, was on his way to India. Upon his arrival, and acting in conjunction with the able soldiers who had hitherto stemmed the tide of rebellion, though they could not alone overcome its force, he assisted in saving the Indian Empire, by reducing it once more to obedience. The final relief of Lucknow was con-

ducted by him, and in consideration of the eminent services rendered to his country upon that occasion, as well as during a life of almost incessant activity in the field, he was, in 1858 raised by his grateful Sovereign to the honour of the Peerage of the United Kingdom, by the title of Baron Clyde of Clydesdale, thus taking his title from the river near whose banks he was born; in the same year he became full General of the army; in 1860 was transferred to the Colonelcy of the Coldstream Guards, and in the month of November, 1862, was presented with the baton of Field-Marshal.

Lord Clyde, in addition to his other honours, was a Knight of the Order of the Star of India, a grand officer of the Legion of Honour, and Knight Grand Cross of the Sardinian Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus, and of the Turkish Order of the Medjidie.

Unfortunately with the gallant warrior, the title he had so well earned will cease to exist, his lordship having never been married, and leaving but an only sister to share the regrets that will long be associated with his memory; to which the following graceful tribute is among the first of our National offerings. A contemporary says:

"The country will hear of the death of Lord Clyde with a grief enhanced by disappointment. He had reached, indeed, the full term of human life, and perhaps his friends had no right to expect that in the ordinary course of things he could be long spared to them; but the energy which was ready to start for India at twenty-four hours' notice is still fresh in the memory of every one, and Lord Clyde's name, would three months since have only recalled the strong and steady hand which suppressed the Indian mutiny and the well-earned honours which he had only begun to enjoy. Few persons connected his name with any thought of age or decline, for there had been nothing of either in his public acts. Indeed, although he has passed away in the evening of his years, he is cut short in the noon of his fame and his powers. He had not been a general officer ten years, and his commission as general only dates five years ago. His services as a commander seemed only to have begun, and if he could have forgotten his age he might not unreasonably have looked forward to an ample time of honour, confidence, and high trusts. We, at least, should naturally have relied on him in any emergency, and should have felt more at ease in any danger to know that our interests were in such proved and unfailing hands. But it is otherwise ordered for him and for us, and no other satisfaction is left us but to pay that honour to his memory which in his lifetime his worth had too late begun to command."

"The nation will, doubtless, accord to his remains the mark of respect and gratitude due to their most faithful servants. No better soldier has ever been borne within the sacred walls of our Christian Pantheon. When England needs one to defend her flag, to vindicate her honour, and to uphold the renown of her arms, may she ever find a champion as trusty, as pure, and as true as Colin Campbell Lord Clyde!"

COLONEL HENDERSON, R.E., Chairman of the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons, has been appointed Member of the Council of Management of Broadmoor Prison.

MESSRS. J. HENRY SCHROEDER and Co. are inviting tenders for a loan of £300,000, bearing interest at 7 per cent. per annum on bonds of the Matanzas and Sabanilla Railroad Company, in the island of Cuba.

La France has no doubt that all the Mexican States will ratify the proclamation of the Archduke Maximilian as Emperor of Mexico, as 15 States out of the 18 have already pronounced in favour of French intervention.

THE fourth anniversary of the Cabmen's Friendly Society was celebrated on the 10th inst. by an excursion to, and dinner at, the Crystal Palace. There was a considerable turn-out of cabmen and their wives and families.

ADVICES have been received in the City communicating the supposed loss of the trading steamer *Espérance* and all hands in the China Seas. She was on a voyage from Kolo to Manila, and was last seen during a heavy gale without her screw, and she is now reported to be lost with all on board.

BLUE EYES V. BLACK.—Among the memorabilia of the Wimbledon Volunteer meeting this bit of information has reached me. The prize-winners have all been July or blue-eyed men. If true, this will go far to establish the inferior practical usefulness of dark eyes, just as their comparative moral qualities were depreciated years ago by Dr. Leask, who wrote: "Men with grey eyes are generally keen, energetic, and at first cold; but you may depend on their sympathy with real sorrow. Search the ranks of our benevolent men and you will agree with me." If light-eyed men are more quick-sighted as well as more keen, energetic, and benevolent, who would not be fair? The theory, so far as shooting is concerned, is verified, as far as my

own observation goes; for Lord Elcho, Lord Bury, Mr. Jopling, and other crack shots, have all eyes of the favourite colour; and the fact is perhaps worth remembering when a country corps has to decide between two or more competitors of almost equal skill who are willing to represent their brethren in arms at the annual symposium.

THE Poles in Paris look for no important results from pending diplomacy. They say they never expected much, they now hope for nothing. They are not pleased with the conduct of the British Government.

THE *New York Times* says that the draught in New York will recommence on Monday, the 3rd instant, and that the Government is prepared for any emergency.

THE Governor of the Bahamas has received information from Lord Lyons that the efforts to induce the Washington Cabinet to withdraw its prohibition to export live stock to Nassau were fruitless.

IT appears from official returns that Algeria is now a better customer to France than all her other colonies put together; indeed, with the exception of England, the United States, Germany, Italy, and Spain, Algeria purchases more French goods than any other country.

THE thirty-third annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science will commence in Newcastle-on-Tyne on Wednesday, the 26th inst., when the first general meeting will be held in the Town Hall, and the Rev. Robert Willa, M.A., F.R.S., will resign the chair, after which Sir W. G. Armstrong will assume the presidency and deliver an address.

MR. GOLDSWORTHY GUNNEY, who has spent a long and useful life in scientific researches, the inventor of a common road steam-carriage, the Bado light, and many other important objects, and also the successful ventilator of the two houses of Parliament, is to receive the honour of knighthood. James Cox, M.D., Edinburgh, will also receive the honour of knighthood.

THE foundation-stone of a new building to accommodate and educate 100 boys was laid at Wood Green, on Saturday afternoon the 8th inst., with full masonic honours. The Freemasons have a noble school for girl on Wandsworth Common, but the school for boys in Lordship Lane is on a comparatively limited scale, and of recent date.

SIR JAMES HUDSON has ceased to be the representative of England at the Court of the King of Italy, and the Hon. Henry Elliot is appointed English Minister in his stead. This *protégé* of Earl Russell was accredited at the Court of Francis II. when the Italian revolution swept away king, throne and kingdom.

ALDERSHOT CAMP has lately presented a strange spectacle. In consequence of an extraordinary and unforeseen drought nearly the whole of the military have been compelled to leave the camp at Aldershot and proceed to Sandhurst, Woolmer, and other localities where an abundant supply of good water could be obtained for both men and horses.

A NUMBER of American Christians, of different denominations, have just organised "the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Japan." The movement originated with the United States Minister and Consul, and by their influence most desirable sites have been secured for a church edifice and for missionary residences in the Yokohama buffs.

MR. JOHN BOWRING has presented to the British Museum his very extensive and magnificent collection of insects, which, besides containing the result of his own researches in India and China, and the different collections made by Wallace, Bates, Mouhot, and others, includes Mr. Tatum's cabinet of carabids, Mr. Jeckel's curculionids, and Chevrolat's and Curtis's longicorn beetles.

THE Meteorological Society, in their last report, say—The first decided increase of temperature occurs in England in March, while in Scotland this takes place in April—a month later; and the first decided fall in the temperature in England occurs in November, while in Scotland it occurs in October—a month earlier. In this manner, England is favoured with an earlier spring, and enjoys a longer continuance of the warmth of summer.

HOW THEY DEAL WITH DRUNKARDS IN NEW ZEALAND.—In the *Lyttelton Times*, published in the province of Canterbury, in the above colony, we find the following advertisement:—"Notice to the public.—Whereas, it has this day been proved to the satisfaction of us, the undersigned, being three of her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, that one Mary Ann Robertson, of Christchurch, who is described at the foot of this notice, has become an habitual drunkard, and is injuring her health by excessive drinking, we hereby, under the provisions of the thirty-third clause of the 'Public-house Ordinance, 1862,' give notice that we prohibit all persons from supplying the said Mary Ann Robertson with any spirituous or fermented liquor whatever, for the space of two years from the date hereof." This warning is enforced by the threat of a fine of £20 or three months' imprisonment.

THE LONDON READER.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUGUST 29, 1863.

THE MYSTERY OF CRIME.

THERE is a dreadful subject for reflection in the number of criminal deeds that escape discovery and its consequences. They frighten the public, and affront the laws of justice almost daily. Felons, misdemeanants, swindlers and fraudulent schemers of every class continually carry on their hidden war against society, and a very large proportion elude detection altogether. Even when developed to that extent, the evil is serious enough, but it becomes a domestic terror—a skeleton sitting at the nation's fireside—when Murder wears the mask, and creeps among us red-handed, yet unrecognized, unconvicted, undenounced, and unpunished! Yet we stand in the presence of the tremendous fact that there must be living among us, at this very day, not a few assassins whose proper place would be beneath the cross-beam of the scaffold, upon that fatal trap-floor which opens upon the murderer's grave.

While England has a memory, it will ponder upon the ghastly mystery of Eliza Grimwood's fate. It will ask, again and again, in spite of positive chaplains, who pretend to know now what they were ignorant of thirty years ago, whether or not that beautiful young Eliza Fenning was guilty of the crime which gave up her fair throat to the hangman's clutch; and if our machinery of justice fails now, as it has failed many times before, a dark problem will be left for posterity to discuss in the secret, hitherto impenetrable, of Road Hill House; of the child lifted from its bed and slain, of the midnight wanderings through the lonely mansion, of the slayer who is yet nameless, of the knife which never was found, and of the blood which never has been traced to the hand that shed it. Then, the slaughter of the unhappy girl in George Street, St. Giles's, appears only too likely to remain upon the black catalogue of unexplained crimes. So, again, the strangulation of the woman at Islington. We do not include within this dreary compass what was termed the Waterloo Bridge Mystery. We do not believe it to have been a tragedy at all, but a nefarious and loathsome hoax. More than enough of guilt in disguise lurks beneath the quietude of English daily life, to enable us to dispense with filthy melodramas, concocted between a medical student and a penny-a-liner, with a batch of hospital bones and a carpet-bag as the raw material of a bewildering public excitement. The point of intense interest is, that so many awful occurrences take place which are only made known by accident. A few days more, and Greenacre would have been rendered safe by the physical annihilation of his human sacrifice. The corpse of Daniel Good's deplorable victim might never have been found had not a policeman put his hand into a manger in search of something else. "Murder will out!" the proverb tells us. We wish it were so. When will the murders of Eliza Grimwood, of the child at Road Hill House, and of the girl in George Street, St. Giles's, be "out?" These old-fashioned sayings are apt to lull us into a false sense of security. Thousands of crimes which have never been punished, and, according to all reasonable probability, thousands of crimes which have never even been discovered, stain our social archives, and disgrace our system of police.

Justice, in our days, is very scrupulous, not to say tender. In our Indian territories we may, perhaps, in the fever, confusion, and embroilment that followed the Sepoy Mutiny, have deceived ourselves upon questions of identity, and, in the impatience of retaliation, hanged the wrong men. But a fair trial is to be enjoyed, even by Dhoondu Pant, commonly known as the Nana Sahib, the butcher of women and torturer of children at Cawnpore. At home, however, the courts are almost excessive in their hesitation to ruin any individual, however humble, with the brand of guilt. Errors, of course, from time to time inevitably occur, and will occur so long as nothing human is perfect. In a comparatively recent case, a clergyman, convicted and sentenced to penal servitude for a most wicked and hateful offence, prosecuted, in his turn, the witnesses against him—two unhappy children upon whom the rod had been unwisely spared—proved them to have uttered a series of elaborate and shameless perjuries, consigned them to the prison and the reformatory; and, under the abominable law which exists in England, was then "pardoned" for the deed which he had never done.

Still more notorious was the case of Dr. Smethurst, charged with poisoning. He was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty, condemned to death, and left for execution. But a murmur of doubt went round the

land. The doubt was expressed at first, timidly, and by a few; soon, however, it rose into an uproar, and the authorities at the Home Office were placed in a singular dilemma. The man must either be sent to the scaffold, or released altogether. He could not be, at one and the same time, too guilty to be let go, and too innocent to be hanged. He was either a monster of depravity, or a much-injured victim. There were those who thought him the one, and those who thought him the other. The public were not convinced that he, in the light of the facts disclosed in evidence, indubitably killed the woman. We are far from saying that it was convinced the other way. They did not even recommend him to mercy for the Hibernian reason that "they thought he mightn't have done it." They simply, clearly, and properly said—"Whatever our belief, you have not proved the man, beyond all scope of discussion, to be a murderer; therefore, you must not hang him."

The just and generous fiat was obeyed, and Dr. Smethurst walked forth from the condemned cell. That mystery, in all likelihood, will never be solved, unless a death-bed repentance, at some future day, tells us the truth of the story. But the moral we would point, from this and from a hundred other similar incidents, is that, in our time, we are far less in danger of Innocence suffering, than of Guilt escaping. It was very different in the times of our grandfathers. The glover and haberdasher of Holborn, convicted upon the testimony of a discarded servant who had turned thief, was hung at the Old Bailey, and, within a month, the judge who tried him died of apoplexy, after sentencing to death for highway robbery, the witness by whose evidence he had been convicted; and who, when doomed to the scaffold for stealing eight shillings, confessed that he had thus sworn away a fellow-creature's life. In another instance a son, who had actually seen his father commit an act of murder, allowed himself to be executed rather than compromise his parent. Criminal trials, however, are now so circumspect, so patient, so minute in their inquiries, so free in their cross-examinations, and so open to the criticism of the press, that although the guilty often escape, the innocent are rarely condemned.

We have referred to three conspicuous examples of unpunished crime. The murder of Eliza Grimwood—for which not less than a hundred individuals, have, at one time or another, been in custody. That at Road Hill House, which rests like the vapour in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, a black suspicion upon one individual head; and the more recent tragedy in George Street, St. Giles. But there is another description of crime which, as a powerful writer most forcibly remarks, may almost be described as popular in this country. It is certainly popular, in fact an institution of political economy, in China. It was long, and is still in some parts of India, a social fashion, involving no infamy or peril to those who follow it. We speak of Infanticide, the stifling, mangling, destroying and concealing or flinging forth to exposure in the streets and fields, of new-born children. We must confess that this, as a rule, is the sin of the poor. There is guilt in every class; the high not less than the low, have their vices, which occasionally, misguided and blind, then blunder within reach of the law; but the blood of an infant seldom stains any except an empty, famished, fevered, and desperate hand; poverty even more than shame, aggravates this scandal to our civilization. These assassinations we repeat, spring from the ignorant, savage, despairing instincts of the hopeless poor; wealth can conceal its misery. Poverty must bear its cross.

But where is the remedy? Not, assuredly in the law as it at present exists. Never did law more flagrantly or contemptibly break down. When felons were hanged for a theft of forty shillings, juries found that prisoners had stolen thirty-nine shillings and elevenpence halfpenny; and these merciful, although perjured, verdicts broke down the dictatorship of the gallows. And so in the case of young women charged with having slain their new-born offspring. There has been manifest strangulation or drowning, and twelve sworn men find that there has only been concealment of birth. Shall we blame them? The law answers "Yes," but humanity and wisdom answer "No," for, as the most brilliant journalist of our time puts it, "the rigour of even truth relents; and shall we not, in presence of a dark-age law which leaves no medium between the gibbet and a lie, pardon in these rude constructors of a benevolent sophistry, something to the charitable spirit which covers the unconscious sin?"

Nevertheless, a remedy must be found somewhere. We are not, we presume, condemned to have these Herodian Massacres of the innocents continually perpetrated in a Christian land—either our legislation, or our administration, or our system of Justice must be taken to task. Certainly not severity of punishment is the one thing needful. The law is too rigorous, and they who dispense it are too lenient, while its officers themselves are, for the most part—we include coroners, juries, and detectives—thoroughly incapable. Justice would gain nothing from a hundred Bloody Assizes,

consigning whole batches of young girls to the hangman's knot, and to that glare of diseased wonder which kindles upon the white faces of the multitude at an execution. We blame neither the compassionate evasions of the jury-box, nor the chance leniencies of the Home Office, both are acceptable to what is best and nearest to the Divine in human nature. That which must be deplored or reprobated, precisely as we choose to think that justice ought to be efficient, or cannot help being incapable, is the secrecy which has become the privilege of so many murderers.

Within the last eighteen months, nearly two thousand bodies of infants have been gathered, either "wilfully murdered," or "suffocated," or "found dead"; murdered all, unquestionably; and in how large a proportion of cases have the criminals had to answer for their deeds? How many of the two hundred and twenty-four women, deliberately stigmatised as murderesses, were brought to justice? Heaven forbid that we should inquire how many of them were hanged. Hanging was the panacea of a brutal age rendered callous and stupid by its own crimes. But what do these ambiguous verdicts mean? What is signified by that favourite phrase of a jury—"found dead?" We know pretty well what it signifies in China, where ancient crones professionally teach to young mothers the art of taking an infant's life, after its first breath, by a consummate and expeditious employment of the forefinger and thumb; and in India, where, with the sweetest and earliest draught of life from the girlish matron's breast, death withers the lips of the child; but, as it has been well put—imagine how the murderess must triumph when she hears the foreman say, with all an average foreman's gravity, and stolidity: "We find that the deceased is dead, which is all we know about it!"

A murder once a day, according to statistics admitting of no challenge, takes place in the metropolis of England alone. Hundreds of dead infants are cast forth annually into the back-slums, brick-fields, and nursery grounds of London and its suburbs. In seven cases out of ten, the crime goes unpunished. When shall we ever know, with that certainty which gives a criminal over to the grasp of the gallows, how poor little Hunter came by her untimely and ghastly death? The law, the administration, and the police are most grievously and discreditably at fault.

A Chinese parent, say the Chinese philosophers, is under a moral obligation to distort, torture, and cramp his daughter's feet. Is it too much to say that we, in civilized England, are under a moral obligation to see that our daughters, at nine years of age, are not carved to pieces by some Greenacre of a market-garden, and that, if they are thus slaughtered and dismembered, their assassins shall at any cost of time, patience, and dexterity, be hunted down? If we go on as we are, the Thugs of India will pay a visit to St. John's Wood and Camberwell.

We are pretty well rid of garotters; but secret murder threatens to flourish with impunity. Many a house, in London and in the provinces, has seen, of late, a black deed, which the detective vision, notwithstanding its over-vaunted keenness and compass, endeavours in vain to bring out of the darkness into the light. Murder, indeed, possesses the ring of Gyges which, as the fable said, rendered its wearer invisible. But how long is the career of the homicide to be a profitable mystery, and when, in this generation of second-sight, spiritualism, mesmerism, and magic, shall we see the man, or the woman who, somnambulist or not, can tell us what was done in that lonely house at Road Hill, on the night when Some One—the anonymous murderer who has reason to despise our police—lifted a child from its bed, killed it, and still scoffs at the justice of man?

THE *New York Herald* says that when the rebellion is crushed America will step in to restore the Republican form of Government in Mexico.

THE Southern journals, although acknowledging the late reverses, appear still confident of the ultimate independence of the South.

ACCOUNTS from Havana calculate the loss of sugar destroyed by the recent fire at Riglos at four million dollars. It is reported that neither the building nor its contents were insured.

THE *New York Herald* asserts that Mr. Seward has informed Earl Russell, that if privateers continue to be fitted out in England Federal war vessels will not regard British ports as a protection to privateers.

GENERAL MOURAVIEFF has openly declared that if there is an armed intervention on the part of the Western Powers, "the whole of Lithuania will burn like a torch."

PRESIDENT DAVIS has issued a proclamation urging the people to receive in thankfulness the lesson taught them in the recent reverses, and appointing August 21 as a day of fasting and prayer.

THE distance over which mails are conveyed within the United Kingdom was last year nearly 160,000 miles a day, being upwards of 7,000 miles more than at the end of 1861.



[THE INTERVIEW.]

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By Mrs. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XLIV.

CLAUDIA'S PERPLEXITIES.

Oh, face most fair, shall thy beauty compare,
With affection's glowing light?
Oh, riches and pride, how fade ye beside
Love's wealth, serene and bright.

Martin F. Tupper.

JUDGE MERLIN went into his well-ordered library, rang the bell, and sent a servant to call his daughter.

The messenger found Claudia walking impatiently up and down the drawing-room floor, and turning herself at each end with an angry jerk. Claudia had not yet been admitted to see Ishmael.

Claudia instantly obeyed the summons. She entered the library with hasty steps, closed the door with a bang, and stood before her father with flushed cheeks, sparkling eyes, and heaving bosom.

"What's the matter?" asked the judge, staring at his daughter.

"You sent for me, papa! I hope it is to take me in to see that poor, half-crushed boy! What does Katie mean by for ever denying me entrance? It is not every day that a poor lad risks his life and gets himself crushed nearly to death in my service, that I should be made to appear to neglect him in this way!"

"You have not wilfully neglected the young man; it is not of the least consequence whether he thinks you have, or not; and, finally, Katie means to obey the doctor's orders. I believe I have answered you, Miss Merlin," replied the judge.

"You sent for me, papa. Was it for anything particular?"

"Yes; to question you. Have you been long acquainted with this Ishmael Gray?"

"Ishmael Worth, papa! Yes, I have known him well ever since you placed me with my Aunt Middleton."

The judge was slowly walking up and down the library, and he continued his walk as he conversed with his daughter.

"Who is this Ishmael Worth, then?"

"You know, papa; the nephew of Reuben Gray, or rather of his wife; but it is the same thing."

"I know he is the nephew of Gray; but that explains nothing! Gray is a rude, ignorant, though well-

meaning man; but this lad is refined, graceful, and cultivated."

Claudia made no comment upon this.

"Now, if you have known him so many years, you ought to be able to explain this inconsistency. One does not expect to find nightingales in crows' nests," said the judge.

Still Miss Merlin was silent.

"Why don't you speak, my dear?"

Claudia blushed, as she answered:

"Papa, what shall I say? You force me to remember things I would like to forget. Socially, Ishmael Worth was born the lowest of all the low. Naturally, he was endowed with the highest moral and intellectual gifts. He is in a great measure self-educated. In worldly position he is beneath our feet; in wisdom and goodness he is far, far above our heads. He is one of nature's princes, but one of society's outcasts."

"But how has the youth contrived to procure the means of such education as he has?" inquired the judge, seating himself opposite his daughter.

"Papa, I will tell you all I know about him," replied Claudia. And she commenced and related the history of Ishmael's struggles, trials, and triumphs, from the hour of her first meeting with him in front of Hamlin's bookshop to that of his self-immolation to save her from death. Claudia spoke with deep feeling. As she concluded her bosom was heaving, her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes tearful with emotion.

"Miss Merlin, you have grown up very much as my trees have, with every natural eccentricity of growth untrimmed; but I hope you will not let your graceful branches trail upon the earth."

"What do you mean, papa?"

"I hope you do not mean to play Catherine to this boy's Huron in a new version of the drama of 'Love; or, The Countess and the Serf!'"

"Papa! how can you say such things to your motherless daughter! You know that I would die first!" exclaimed the imperious girl, indignantly, as she flung herself into a passion and out of the room. She left the door wide open; but had scarcely disappeared before her place in the doorway was filled up by the head and smiling face of Reuben.

"Well, Gray?"

"Well, sir, I have brought the farm books all made up to the first of this month, sir," laying the volumes on the table before his master.

"And very neatly and accurately done, too," remarked the judge, as he turned over the pages and examined the items. "It is not your handwriting, Gray?"

"No, sir!"

"Nor little Kitty's?"

"Little Kitty has been in California a year and more. It is my nephew, Ishmael Worth, sir," replied Reuben, with a little pardonable pride.

"That is an intelligent lad of yours, Gray."

"Well, sir, he is."

"How do you account for his being so different from—from—"

"From me and Hannah?" inquired simple Reuben, helping the judge out of his difficulty. "Well, sir, I suppose as how his nature were different, and so he grew up different according to his nature. Human creatures differ like vegetables, sir; some one sort and some another. Me and Hannah, sir, we're like plain 'tatoes; but Ishmael, sir, is like a rich, bright, blooming peach! That's the only way as I can explain it, sir."

"A very satisfactory explanation, Gray! How are Hannah and those wonderful twins?"

"Fine, sir; Miss Claudia was so good as to send word as how she would come to see Hannah as soon as she was able to see company. Hannah is able, sir, and will be proud to see Miss Claudia and to show her the babbies."

"Very well, Gray! I will let my daughter know," said the judge, rising from his chair.

"Reuben took his departure, but in another moment he reappeared, holding his hat in his hand, saying:

"I beg your pardon, sir."

"Well, what now, Gray?"

"If you please, sir, to give my duty to Miss Claudia, and beg her not to let poor Hannah know as Ishmael has been so badly hurt. When she missed him we told her how he was staying up here long of your honour, and she naterally thinks how he is a-doing of some more liber-airy work for you; and we dar'n't tell her any better or how the truth is, for fear of heaving of her back, sir."

"Very well, I will caution Miss Merlin."

"Thank your honour," said Reuben, and once more he bowed himself out.

The judge conveyed to his daughter the invitation and the caution.

Claudia was moped half to death, and desired nothing better than a little amusement. So the same afternoon she set out on her walk to Woodside, followed by her own maid, carrying a large basket; she found Hannah sitting in state in her chair, and contemplating with maternal satisfaction the infant prodigies that lay in a cradle at her feet.

"Do not attempt to rise! I am so glad to see you looking so well, Mrs. Gray! I am Miss Merlin," was Claudia's frank greeting, as she approached Hannah, and held out her hand.

"Thank you, miss; you are very good to come!

and I am glad to see you," said the proud mother, heartily shaking the hand offered by the visitor.

"Now let me see the babies."

What woman or girl ever looked upon sleeping infancy without pleasure? Claudia's face brightened into beaming smiles as she contemplated these children.

"Mattie, the basket."

Mattie brought it.

"Mrs. Gray, these wines, cordials, and jellies are all of Katie's own make; and she declares them to be the best possible supports for invalids in your condition," said Miss Merlin, uncovering the basket.

"But really and indeed, miss, you are too kind."

"Now, Mrs. Gray, I must bid you good afternoon. I cannot keep papa waiting dinner for me. But I will come to see you again to-morrow, if you will allow me to do so."

"Miss Merlin, I should be proud and happy to see you as often as you think fit to come."

"And, mind, I am to stand godmother to the babies."

"Certainly, miss, if you please to do so."

"What are to be their names?"

"John and Mary, miss—after Reuben's father and my mother."

"Very well; I will be spiritually responsible for John and Mary! Good-bye, Mrs. Gray."

Claudia shook hands and departed. She had scarcely got beyond the threshold of the door, when she heard the voice of Hannah calling her back:

"Miss Merlin!"

Claudia returned.

"I beg your pardon, miss; but I hear my nephew, Ishmael Worth, is up at the House, doing something for the judge."

"He is up there," answered Claudia, evasively.

"Tell him, if you please, that I want to see him as soon as he can possibly get home."

"I will tell him," said Claudia, smiling and retiring.

Hannah sat, gazing upon her own two fine, healthy, handsome babies, that were so much admired, so well beloved, and so tenderly cared for; and she thought of little Ishmael in his poor, orphaned infancy—so pale, thin, and sickly, so disliked, avoided, and neglected! At this remembrance her penitent heart melted in remorseful tenderness. The advent of her own children had shown to Hannah by retrospective action all the cruelty and hardness of heart she had once felt and shown towards Ishmael.

"But I will make it all up to him—poor, dear boy! I will make it all up to him in the future! Oh! how hard my heart was towards him, as if he could have helped being born, poor fellow. How badly I treated him. Suppose now, as a punishment for my sin, I was to die and leave my children to be despised and neglected, and wished dead by them as had the care of 'em. How would I feel? although my children are so much healthier and stronger, and better able to bear neglect than ever Ishmael was, poor, poor fellow! It is a wonder he ever lived through it all. Surely, only God sustained him, for he was bereft of nearly all human help. Oh, Nora! Nora! I never did my duty to your boy; but I will do it now, if God will only forgive and spare me for the work!" concluded Hannah, as she raised both of her own children to her lap.

Miss Merlin reached Tanglewood in time for dinner, at six o'clock.

At table the judge said to her:

"Well, Claudia! the doctor has been here on his evening visit, and he says that you may see our young patient in the morning, after he has had his breakfast; but that no visitor must be admitted to his chamber at any later hour of the day."

"Very well, papa. I hope you will give Katie to understand that, so that she may not give me any trouble when I apply at the door."

"Katie understands it all, my dear," said the judge.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE INTERVIEW.

The lady of his love re-entered there: She was serene and smiling then, and yet she knew she was by him beloved—she knew, for quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart was darkened by her shadow; and she saw that he was wretched; but she saw not all. He took her hand, a moment o'er his face A tablet of unutterable thoughts Was traced, and then it faded as it came. Byron.

It was as yet early morning; but the day promised to be sultry, and all the windows of Ishmael's chamber were open to facilitate the freest passage of air. Ishmael lay motionless upon his cool, white bed, letting his glances wander abroad, whither his broken limbs could no longer carry him.

His room, being a corner one, rejoiced in four large windows, two looking east and two north. Close up to these windows grew the clustering woods. Amid their branches, even the wildest birds built nests, and

their strange songs mingled with the rustle of the golden green leaves as they glimmered in the morning sun and breeze.

As these reveries floated through the clear, active brain of the invalid youth, the door of his chamber softly opened.

Why did Ishmael's heart bound in his bosom, and every pulse throb?

She stood within the open doorway! How lovely she looked, with her soft, white muslin morning dress floating freely around her graceful form, and her glittering jet black ringlets shading her snowy forehead, shadowy eyes, and damask cheeks!

She closed the door as softly as she had opened it and advanced into the room.

Old Katie arose from some obscure corner and placed a chair for her near the head of Ishmael's bed on his right side.

Claudia sank gently into this seat and turned her face towards Ishmael, and attempted to speak; but a sudden, hysterical rising in her throat, choked her voice.

Her eyes had taken in all at a glance!—the splintered leg, the bandaged arm, the plastered chest, the ashen complexion, the sunken cheeks, and the hollow eyes of the poor youth—and utterance failed her.

But Ishmael gently and respectfully pressed the hand she had given him, and smiled as he said:

"It is very kind of you to come and see me, Miss Merlin. I thank you, earnestly." For however strong Ishmael's emotions might have been, he possessed the self-controlling power of an exalted nature.

"Oh, Ishmael!" was all that Claudia found ability to say; her voice was choked, her bosom heaving, her face pallid.

"Pray, pray do not disturb yourself, Miss Merlin; indeed I am doing very well," said the youth, smiling.

The next instant he turned away his face; it was to conceal a spasm of agony that suddenly sharpened all his features, blanched his lips, and forced the cold sweat out upon his brow. But Claudia had seen it all.

"Oh, I fear you suffer very much," she said.

The spasm had passed as quickly as it came. He turned to her his smiling eyes.

"I fear you suffer very, very much," she repeated, looking at him.

"Oh, no, not much; see how soon the pain passed away, and if you knew how little I should value my life in comparison with your safety——" Ishmael paused; for he felt that perhaps he was going too far.

"I think that you have well proved how ready you are to sacrifice your life for the preservation, not only of your friends, but of your very foes! I have not forgotten your rescue of Alf and Ben Burghes," said the heiress, emphatically, yet a little coldly, as if, while she was anxious to give him the fullest credit and the greatest honour for courage, generosity and magnanimity, she was desirous to disclaim any personal interest he might feel for himself.

"There is a difference, Miss Merlin," said Ishmael, with gentle dignity.

"Oh, I suppose there is; one would rather risk one's life for a friend than for an enemy," replied Claudia, feily.

"I have displeased you, Miss Merlin; I am very sorry for it. Pray, forgive me," said Ishmael, with a certain suave and stately courtesy, for which the youth was beginning to be noted.

"Oh, you have not displeased me, Ishmael! How could you, you have just risked and almost sacrificed your life to save mine! No, you have not displeased; but you have surprised me! I would not have had you run any risk for me, Ishmael, that you would not have run for the humblest individual on my father's estate; that is all."

"Miss Merlin, I would have run any risk to save any one at need; but I might not have borne the after consequences in all cases, with equal patience—equal pleasure. Ah, Miss Merlin, forgive me, if I am now happy in my pain! forgive me this presumption, for it is the only question at issue between us," said the youth, with a pleasing glance.

"Oh, Ishmael, let us not talk any more about me! Talk of yourself. Papa told me that two of your limbs were broken and your chest injured, and now I see all that for myself."

"My injuries are doing very well. My broken bones are knitting together again as fast as they possibly can, my physician says."

"You are very patient, and therefore you will do well, if you are not doing so now. Ishmael, now that I am permitted to visit you, I shall come every day. But they have limited me to fifteen minutes' stay this morning, and my time is up. Good morning, Ishmael. I will come again to-morrow; and then, if you continue to grow better, I may be allowed to remain with you for half-an-hour," she said, rising.

"Thank you, Miss Merlin; I shall try to grow better; you have given me a great incentive to improvement."

Claudia's face grew grave again. She bowed coldly and left the room.

Ishmael's next visitor was Reuben Gray, who was admitted to see him for a few minutes only. This was Reuben's first visit to the invalid, and as under the transient influence of the stimulant Ishmael looked brighter than usual, Reuben thought that he must be getting on remarkably well, and congratulated him accordingly.

Ishmael smilingly returned the compliment, by wishing Gray joy of his son and daughter.

Reuben grinned with delight and expatiated on their beauty until it was time for him to take leave.

"Your Aunt Hannah don't know as you've been hurt, my boy; we don't tell her, for fear of the consequences. But now, as you really do seem to be getting on so well, and she is getting strong so fast, and continually asking after you, I think I will just go and tell her all about it, as how there is no cause to be alarmed no more," said Reuben, as he stood, hat in hand, by Ishmael's bed.

"Yes, do, Uncle Reuben, else she will think I neglect her," pleaded Ishmael.

Reuben promised, and then took his departure. That was the last visit Ishmael received that day.

Reuben kept his word, and as soon as he got home he gradually broke to Hannah the news of Ishmael's accident, softening the matter as much as possible, softening it out of all truth, for when the anxious woman insisted on knowing exactly the extent of her nephew's injuries, poor Reuben, alarmed for the effect upon his wife's health, boldly affirmed that there was nothing worse in Ishmael's case than a badly sprained ankle, that confined him to the house! And it was some time longer before Hannah heard the truth of the affair.

The next day Claudia Merlin repeated her visit to Ishmael, and remained with him for half an hour; and from that time she visited his room daily, increasing each day the length of her stay.

It was four weeks before he could leave his bed for a sofa. And it was about that time that Hannah got out again; and incredulous, anxious, and angry all at once, walked up to Tanglewood to find out for herself whether it was a "sprained ankle" only, that kept her nephew confined there.

Mrs. Gray was shown at once to the room where Ishmael, whose very breath was pure truth, being asked, told her all about his injuries.

Poor Hannah wept tears of retrospective pity; but did not in her inmost heart blame Gray for the "pious fraud" he had practised with the view of saving her own feelings at a critical time. She would have had Ishmael conveyed immediately to Woodside, that she might nurse him herself; but neither the doctor, the judge, nor the heiress would consent to his removal; and so Hannah had to submit to their will, and leave her nephew where he was; but she consoled herself by walking over every afternoon to see Ishmael.

Claudia usually spent several hours of the forenoon in Ishmael's company. He was still very weak, pale, and thin. His arm was in a sling, and as it was his right arm, as well as his right leg that had been broken, he could not use a crutch; so that he was confined all day to the sofa or the easy chair, in which his nurse would place him in the morning.

Meanwhile Ishmael revelled in what would have been a fool's paradise to most young men in similar circumstances; but which really was not such to him; dreaming those dreams of youth, the realization of which would have been impossible to nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand, situated as he was; but which intellect and will made quite probable for him. With his master mind and heart, he read Claudia Merlin thoroughly, and understood her better than she understood herself. In his secret soul he knew that every inch of progress made in her favour was a permanent conquest never to be yielded up. And loving her as loyally as ever knight loved lady, he let her deceive herself by thinking she was amusing herself at his expense, for he was certain of ultimate victory.

Other thoughts also occupied Ishmael. The first of September, the time for opening the Rushy school, had come; and the youth was still unable to walk. Under these circumstances, he wrote a note to the agent, Brown, and told him that it would be wrong to leave the school shut up while the children of the neighbourhood remained unttaught and requested him to seek another teacher.

It cost the youth some self-sacrifice to give up this last chance of employment; but we already know that Ishmael never hesitated a moment between duty and self-interest.

It was late in October before Ishmael's right arm was strong enough to support the crutch that was needed to relieve the pressure upon his right leg when he attempted to walk.

It was about this time that Judge Merlin was heard often to complain of the great accumulation of correspondence upon his hands.

Ishmael, ever ready to be useful, modestly tendered his services to assist.

After a little hesitation, the judge thanked the youth and accepted his offer. And the next day Ishmael was

installed in a comfortable leather chair in the library, with his crutch beside him and a writing-table covered with letters to be read and answered before him. These letters were all open, and each had a word or a line pencilled upon it indicating the character of the answer that was to be given. Upon some was simply written the word "No;" upon others, "Yes;" upon some, "Will think of it;" upon others, again, "Call on me when I come to town;" and so forth. All this, of course, Ishmael had to put into courteous language, using his own judgment after reading the letters.

Of course it was the least important part of his correspondence that Judge Merlin put into his young assistant's hands; but, notwithstanding that, the trust was a very responsible one. Even Ishmael doubted whether he could discharge such unfamiliar duties with satisfaction to his employer.

He worked diligently all that day, however, and completed the task that had been laid out for him before the bell rang for the late dinner. Then he arose and respectfully called the judge's attention to the finished work, and bowed and left the room.

With something like curiosity and doubt, the judge went up to the table and opened and read three or four of the letters written for him by his young amanuensis. And, as he read, surprise and pleasure lighted up his countenance.

"The boy is a born diplomatist! I should not wonder if the world should hear of him some day, after all!" he said, as he read letter after letter that had been left unsealed for his optional perusal. In these letters he found his own hard "No's" expressed with a courtesy that softened them even to the most bitterly disappointed; his arrogant "Yes's" with a delicacy that could not wound the self-love of the most sensitive petitioner; and his intermediate, doubtful answers, rendered with a clearness of which by their very nature they seemed incapable.

"The boy is a born diplomatist," repeated the judge in an accession of astonishment.

But he was wrong in his judgment of Ishmael. If the youth's style of writing was gracious, courteous, delicate, it was because his inmost nature was pure, refined, and benignant. If his letters denying favours soothed rather than offended the applicant, and if those granting favours flattered rather than humiliated the petitioner, it was because of that angelic attribute of Ishmael's soul that made it so painful to him to give pain, so delightful to impart delight. There was no thought of diplomatic dealing in all Ishmael's truthful soul.

The judge was excessively pleased with his young assistant. Judge Merlin was an excellent lawyer, but no orator, and never had been, nor could be one. He had not himself the gift of eloquence either in speaking or writing; and, therefore, perhaps he was the more astonished and pleased to find it in the possession of his letter-writer. He was pleased to have his correspondence well written, for it reflected credit upon himself.

Under the influence of his surprise and pleasure he took up his handful of letters and went directly to Ishmael's room.

He found the youth seated in his arm-chair by the window engaged in reading.

"What have you there?" inquired Judge Merlin.

Ishmael smiled and turned the title-page to his questioner.

"Humph! 'Coke upon Lyttelton.' Lay it down, Ishmael, and attend to me," said the judge, drawing a chair and seating himself beside the youth.

Ishmael immediately closed the book and gave the most respectful attention.

"I am very much pleased with the manner in which you have accomplished your task, Ishmael. You have done your work remarkably well! So well that I should like to give you longer employment," he said.

Ishmael's heart leaped in his bosom.

"Thank you, sir; I am very glad you are satisfied with me," he replied.

"Let us see now: this is the fifteenth of October; I shall remain here until the first of December, when we go to town; and I shall be glad, Ishmael, during the interval of my stay here, to retain you as my assistant. What say you?"

"Indeed, sir, I shall feel honoured and happy in serving you."

"I will give you what I consider a fair compensation for so young a beginner. By the way, how old are you?"

"I shall be nineteen in December."

"Very well; I will give you four pounds a month and your board."

"Judge Merlin," said Ishmael, as his pale face flushed crimson, "I shall feel honoured and happy in serving you; but from you I cannot consent to receive any compensation."

The judge stared at the speaker with astonishment that took all power of reply away; but Ishmael continued:

"Consider, sir, the heavy obligations under which I already rest towards you, and permit me to do what I can to lighten the load."

"What do you mean? What the deuce are you talking about?" at last asked the judge.

"Sir, I have been an inmate of your house for nearly three months, nursed, tended, and cared for as if I had been a son of the family. What can I render you for all these benefits? Sir, my gratitude and services are due to you, are your own. Pray, therefore, do not mention compensation to me again," replied the youth.

"Young man, you surprise me beyond measure. Your gratitude and services due to me? For what, pray? For taking care of you when you were so dangerously injured in my service? Did you not receive all your injuries in saving my daughter from a violent death? After that, who should have taken care of you but me? 'Taken care of you?' I should take care of all your future! I should give you a profession, or some other substantial and permanent compensation for your great service, to clear accounts between us!" exclaimed the judge.

Ishmael bowed his head. Oh, bitterest of all bitter mortifications! To hear her father speak to him of reward for saving Claudia's life! To think how every one was so far from knowing that in saving Claudia, he had saved himself! He had a right to risk his life for Claudia; and no one, not even her father, had a right to insult him by speaking of reward! Claudia was his own; Ishmael knew it, though no one on earth, not even the heiress herself, suspected it.

The judge watched the youth as he sat with his fine young forehead bowed thoughtfully upon his hand; and Judge Merlin understood Ishmael's reluctance to receive pay; but did not understand the cause of it.

"Come, my boy," he said; "you are young and inexperienced. You cannot know much of life. I am an old man of the world, capable of advising you. You should follow my advice."

"Indeed, I will gratefully do so, sir," said Ishmael, raising his head, glad, amid all his humiliation, to be advised by Claudia's father.

"Then, my boy, you must reflect that it would be very improper for me to avail myself of your really very valuable assistance without giving you a reasonable compensation; and that, in short, I could not do it," said the judge, firmly.

"Do you regard the question in that light, sir?" inquired Ishmael, doubtfully.

"Most assuredly. It is the only true light in which to regard it."

"Then I have no option but to accept your own terms, sir. I will serve you gladly and gratefully, to the best of my ability," concluded the youth.

And the affair was settled to their mutual satisfaction.

(To be continued.)

MADELINE; OR, THE BOSOM FRIEND.

CHAPTER I.

THE warm embers were fast dying out, and the faint flickering of a small night-lamp proved that its light would soon cease to show the scanty furniture of the room in which it was placed. The rough wooden table on which it stood, was scarcely seen by the faint ray it gave, and only when, a few hours later, the beams of morning threw their light in at the window, could the poverty which reigned in the apartment, be fully recognized. Two wooden chairs and a press-bed completed its contents. On the latter lay a child of about five years old, his little head was resting on a rough tick pillow, without any covering to render it softer to his downy cheek; his tiny arms were thrown, one over the coarse shawl which served as a counterpane, the other ensconced among the silken curls which played around his brow, his eyelids were red and swollen, their deep fringes were yet damp, and a tiny sob, ever and anon broke from him in his sleep; but he did not awake as the door was gently opened—so gently, as if the intruder feared to disturb the occupant of that dreary chamber.

With a quiet tread, a woman entered the room. She was young, and her features bore traces of much beauty, which want and starvation had done its utmost to efface; her dress, like the apartment in which she lived, was old and scant; but, as with her thin hand she closed the door, the whiteness and transparency of the former showed that she had not been reared in the poverty which now surrounded her. On the finger of her left hand there sparkled a magnificent diamond ring, which was, alas! the only article of value she possessed. She approached the bed on which the boy lay, and gently raised the coverlid from off him; the child was not undressed, his little feet were encased in red morocco boots, above which were seen socks of the finest work; a fine cambric petticoat, with deep embroidery, just came below a skirt of the most costly black Genoa velvet; whilst a shirt of the same colour as his boots, was passed over one of his fair shoulders, and tied in a large bow, under the arm on the other side. For a long time did the woman gaze upon the infant slumberer; but as the

sound of footsteps on the stairs fell on her ear, she again covered him with the shawl and advanced to the door, which she noiselessly opened to the new-comer.

"Gently!" she said, as a man entered; "you have done your bidding, now take your reward and be gone!"

"Not yet," he replied, as he forced his way into the apartment; "Madeline, I have brought the child as you desired; in this, as in everything else, have I ever done as you wished, and think you I did it for a paltry jewel? Would I, for the brightest gem that ever shone, do as I have done for you? Did not a fiercer passion than the love of gain urge me to it? Oh! withhold not the reward I ask, turn not, as heretofore from my prayer—be my wife!"

"Your wife!" and with a peal of laughter which awoke the sleeping boy, Madeline turned from the man, who had fallen on his knees at her feet. "Your wife!" she repeated, in a frantic tone; "never again mention marriage to her who would rather be as you now behold her, than wed, if the wealth of Croesus rolled into her lap on her bridal morn. Have I not told you oft that I never loved but once—that love, alas! you know, made me what I am; and would you, Bertram, ask the hand that is stained with blood—and the heart, the depth of the wickedness of which, not even you can fathom?"

Madeline noticed not the effect of her words on the young man, who, proud and erect, now stood before her, but strove to soothe the grief of the infant whose wailing now filled the chamber. Fiend as she had become, it was not without some qualm of conscience that she heard the little fellow's reiterated cries for his mother, which even awoke pity in her remorseless breast, and words of kindness, which had long been strangers to her tongue, poured forth as she used every endearment to still the sobs of the boy: at last, utterly worn out with fatigue and tears, he fell asleep, and after again covering him with the old shawl, Madeline advanced to the comfortable fireplace, where nothing remained but the charred ashes of the last night's fire; opening a cupboard, she took out a brush and some fuel, and, without noticing Bertram, who still remained as if riveted to the spot where he stood, she began to make preparations for rekindling a blaze, and as she set light to the wood, its crackling sound seemed to denote that it alone spoke of comfort in that desolate abode; but, still, if it had been possible to have divested that garret of its dreary aspect, Madeline did all in her power to do so; she brushed the hearth, and after placing a kettle of water on the fire, which burned cheerfully, she took the lamp off the table, dusted the latter, and covered it with a white cloth, which she took from another cupboard on the other side of the chimney-piece. This closet contained all her little store of provisions, which consisted of a loaf of bread, a few pieces of common cheese, and butter, but such as they were, they were carefully placed on the cloth, and not until she had completed her arrangements, did she address her companion, who had watched her every movement.

"Bertram," she said, as she took a small bottle from her pocket, "you must have need of something after last night's work; it is now nearly nine o'clock, and we have neither of us closed an eye; there is sugar and hot water; take this, and make something to drown your care, and to dispel that misery from your countenance."

He accepted the chair Madeline had placed for him, saying:

"It has indeed been a sad work, and what is my reward? Am I still to go on as hitherto, hoping against hope, when one word from you Madeline would restore all that has been lost, and I should again become what I was when we first met and what I should still have been had that meeting never taken place. Oh! Madeline, dear Madeline, be my wife! let us together fly this hell, help me to repair the fortune I have lost, and I shall never repent that for your sake I became a thief. We are yet young," he continued; "have I not sufficiently proved my love, a love which has been as a worm ever gnawing at my heart, a love unrequited, yet ever burning with the same fierce flame? No other love had a place in my bosom, then why—why am I still rejected?"

No laughter now broke from Madeline, but, seizing the hand of her companion, she bathed it with her tears. "Bertram," she said, "you know not what you ask. Did I not tell you before that you knew not half the wickedness that is buried in my heart; and rather would I die here in my misery and want, than unite myself to one, who loves me but too well. Listen to me, listen to a tale of sin and woe, and then pity, but do not curse, Madeline:—"

Edward Glandover was the clergyman of a poor and obscure village, he was my father, a mother I never knew, she having died when I was an infant, nor did many years elapse, ere one grave held both my parents, and I was left to the care of a maiden aunt. With her, my young life became unbearable; the recreations other children were permitted to enjoy, to me were denied as a waste of time, which might be more profitably employed in improving my mind by study; at last I

persuaded my aunt to send me to a boarding-school, where I remained until I was sixteen, only returning to what was termed my home during the vacations. Like all, or nearly all girls, I had what they call a bosom friend. She was of my own age, less handsome, but when I was fiery and passionate, she was subdued and gentle, and was consequently a greater favourite with all. There was not a secret we did not confide to each other, or, at least I thought so then. We both left the school at the same time, and after quitting the seminary Alice Mandeville asked me to spend a few months with her at her father's residence, and such being far more in accordance with my feelings than the strict régime of my aunt's establishment, I became the guest of Alice at Mandeville Park. Madeline paused as the recollection of the past flashed before her memory, and with a deep sigh continued her narrative.

There were many visitors at Mandeville besides myself, as it was the delight of its owner, who was a rich, retired merchant, to fill his house with friends. Amongst the number was Lord Charles Thistleton.

"Thistleton!" exclaimed Bertram, starting from his chair; "of what place?"

"I knew not then," replied Madeline, "but know you any of the name?"

"I did once," responded the young man, as he drew his hand across his brow, "but proceed."

Month succeeded month, and still Lord Charles remained, but each week Alice and myself appeared to be less affectionate than formerly—my caresses were even returned by her with coldness, and all confidence between us, on her side, seemed at an end. And such was the reason for my not telling her (from whom, till then, I had hidden nothing) of my engagement to Lord Charles, but somehow, I know not by what means, it came to her ears, and from that day Alice Mandeville became my enemy, but it was the quiet foe that told not of her hatred, and so far from informing me that she was aware of my attachment, she would, in the presence of Lord Charles, ever bring up the name in unison with my own of Captain Glenarvo, a conceited and brainless officer of the Guards, who would pester me with attentions which I looked upon as another proof of his folly, and treated them accordingly. I never hid such from Lord Charles, who, I felt assured, loved me devotedly. Madeline heaved a heavy sigh, and a choking sound was perceptible in her voice when she continued:

Three months had now elapsed, and only one more week had to pass before I should leave Mandeville Park. The other guests had all left, with the exception of Lord Charles and Captain Glenarvo, when one morning the former met me at the breakfast-table with all the coolness of which he was capable, instead of the usual loving glance. I could eat nothing, and to the foolish sayings of the captain, gave the most foolish replies. Alice was in extraordinary spirits, so different from her customary quiet way, and so engrossed were she and Lord Charles with their own conversation, that, pleading indisposition, I apologized for leaving the table. With a brain on fire I rushed into the air, as I felt almost suffocated with the feelings which oppressed me, and a foreboding of evil I could not overcome. I know not how long I had been absent—I headed not the scorching sun, as it poured down on my burning temples, but walked round and round the beautiful gardens, without caring whither my footsteps led me, nor did I know that other's beside mine were treading the velvet sward until Lord Charles was beside me. He was in travelling costume, and evidently equipped for a journey.

"Miss Glandover," he said, "I am come to say, farewell."

"Farewell!" I cried, "but why call me not Madeline? Oh! Charles, why do you thus coldly part from one you profess to love?"

"Profess to love!" he said, "what I professed, God only knows how deeply I felt, Madeline; I loved you with a man's strong, firm love, and you have trifled with it, as with a thing of naught. Even while hisping vows of constancy to me, you were planning assignations with another."

"Charles," I cried, "tis false as God is true, and whoever told you so, is a liar," and letting my passion rise, as I felt sure that Alice was my calumniator, I continued: "I had hoped, until proofs were in his possession, that Lord Charles Thistleton would not have stooped to listen to the tongue of jealousy and hate."

"I have the proof," he replied, holding up a glove and letter at the same time. It was my glove, and the letter was a facsimile of my handwriting, it was addressed to Captain Glenarvo, appointing an interview on the preceding evening.

"Where found you this?" I asked.

"Where," he replied, "Miss Glandover had hoped that Captain Glenarvo would have been the first to see it, as it is only he who smokes, and in the evening resorts to the retreat for that purpose; but I was warned," he continued, "and unfortunately saw what was meant for other eyes than mine."

"I did not write that letter," I broke forth; "it is

the vile work of a vile hand, the glove I missed, but left it not where it was discovered."

"Liar!" exclaimed Lord Charles, with flashing eyes, and the voice of a demon.

It was enough, I left him where he stood, and that day, without adieu to Alice or my kind host, I departed from Mandeville Hall.

I returned to the dull, cold home of my father's sister; and the only news which reached me there was the marriage of Lord Charles Thistleton with Miss Mandeville; I became irascible and impetuous; I more than ever felt the confinement of my aunt's house, from which I was soon released by her death. I never loved her while living, and therefore mourned her not when dead; all her property became mine, and when decency no longer obliged me to remain, I started for London. Revenge was the fatal passion that had gained possession of my heart. I saw by the papers that an heir had been born to Lord Charles; and through the father and child I hoped to strike an arrow into the heart of Alice. It was then, Bertram, that I met you; like me, you were not what you seemed; I saw the gentle, manly bearing beneath the shabby coat, and I felt you were the instrument to work out my revenge; like me, you waged war against all mankind, and hated the whole race; but the cause of your hate I never questioned, I never cared to know; it was enough you could give me the clue of the whereabouts of him I sought, and the rest—

She paused, as a groan escaped from the breast of Bertram, as, with his face buried in his hands, he listened to the story of her life.

"Enough!" he cried: "Madeline, spare me! spare me!"

"Hear me to the end," she replied: "The little my aunt left me was fast diminishing, until I was obliged to fulfil the office which before I had paid others to perform—that of spy upon the actions of Lord and Lady Thistleton. Wherever they went I followed, ever awaiting the opportunity, which at length presented itself. The demon awoke with double fury within my breast; but when the victim was already in my hands, I wavered. It was but for a moment; the appearance of Alice, as she came to the bedside of her husband, where I, under the disguise of a hired nurse, was seated, again aroused the vile spirit within me, and that night I brought to a crisis the malignant fever of which all thought he died."

"And you killed—" broke in Bertram.

"I was the cause of his death," responded Madeline, without waiting for Bertram to conclude his sentence; "but my revenge was not yet satisfied. Alice, after the death of her husband, seemed happy in the society of her child, and I vowed to deprive her even of that comfort. Yes," she said, approaching the bed, and raising the sleeping boy in her arms, "here is my revenge. Here is Cecil, the son of Charles Thistleton, and now," she continued, after again restoring the child to his wooden couch, "Bertram, would you wed Madeline?"

He arose from his chair.

"Oh, God!" he exclaimed, "I would indeed have been happy with the Madeline I knew ere I dipped my finger in this accursed crime, or ere she became the murderer of my brother."

He stayed not to witness the consternation depicted on the face of Madeline, who, white as death, fell on the floor as Bertram closed the door behind him.

CHAPTER II.

THREE YEARS have passed since the night that Bertram Thistleton took his brother's son from the lap of luxury to the home of penury and want. Since then he had neither seen the woman he so madly loved, nor the stolen boy. Unconsciously he had become instrumental in the death of his brother, whose child, as he stood in his path as heir to the estate, he had consented to give into the hands of Madeline, without inquiring the motive which induced her thus to deprive Lady Thistleton of her sole remaining comfort. But when the fatal truth came upon him as a thunderbolt, and he fled from the presence of her who had led him into such crime, he vowed never to look upon her again; and, turning from his former reckless life, became the friend of the widow, whom, as his brother's wife, he had previously regarded as an intruder, coming between him and his rights.

But with Madeline, how differently had those years fled! Denying herself almost the necessities of life, in order to enable her to feed and clothe the boy, on whom she lavished more than a mother's love, her health gave way, and when we again behold her she is stretched on the same bed where last we saw the child who now is the only being whose voice brings comfort to the wretched woman.

"Go," she cried, "and once again try to move his obdurate heart. Tell him I am dying, and I would fain relieve myself of the secret which burns into my soul with an unquenchable flame; tell him, as he hopes for forgiveness, not to turn from my prayer. My span of life is nearly run; go, Cecil, go!" She pressed her

burning lips to the fair brow of the boy, who yet lingered.

"Oh! mother, mother," he sobbed forth, "he will not see me, indeed he will not; and the servants thrust me so roughly away. I will stay with you; I will never leave you while you live, and if you die, Cecil will avenge your death." And the dark eyes of the child flashed, as Madeline had seen those of his father.

"Foolish boy! you know not what these lips could speak; you know not the mystery which hangs over your head. Cecil, will you refuse your mother?"

He stayed not for another demand, but throwing his arms around the wasted form of the dying woman, he kissed her and was gone.

Madeline was now alone, alone with her conscience, and her God; she felt that the crime which weighed so heavily on her heart, was not too great for Him to forgive; she, who for years had never sought His throne, now in her last moments, felt her only comfort come from above. The prayer uttered by her dying lips had brought its solace, and with a firm, unwavering faith, she awaited the return of Cecil.

Her quick ear soon detected the sound of his footsteps as he ascended the stairs, and as a firmer tread followed, she raised a prayer of thankfulness to him who had not turned a deaf ear to her cry. Gently, as three years ago it had turned on its hinges, was the door now opened, and Cecil entered followed by Bertram; but how altered was the appearance of the latter! no reckless look now pervaded his countenance, his dress showed the rank of life in which he moved, and scarcely, as he approached the bed, was he recognizable to her who had longed for his appearance.

"Madeline!" he said, as he perceived the look of astonishment on her countenance, "I am here, what is it you would say?" She extended to him the hand, on which still sparkled the diamond ring, and pointing to the glittering stone, which with difficulty remained on her wasted finger,

"Bertram," she said, "you may forget, I never can; but it was not for that I sent for you. Tell me, where is Lady Thistleton?" And as she perceived his hesitation, in an excited tone she continued, "Turn not from the prayer of the dying—bring her here! For the sake of Heaven stay me not in the accomplishment of the only good work that I have ever done. As I once implored you to assist me in the evil, now, by that love which made you do so, help me in the reparation of that evil; let me restore to her her child, let me reinstate him, whom I love more than I thought this heart could ever love, to that position which is his by birth, and I shall die happy."

She fell back, overcome by exhaustion, and Bertram indeed feared that she had ceased to breathe; but, as Cecil, who had flung himself upon the bed, wildly implored her to reply, the heavy eyelids once more unclosed, and tears, which until now, for three years had never stained her cheek, flowed down her sunken face, as she again and again pressed the sobbing boy to her breast.

"Oh! Bertram," she said, as he still remained, "you never loved me, you never knew what love was, or you would not thus turn a deaf ear to my petition. Oh, God! this is terrible, terrible!" and raising herself up in the bed, with tears she again implored him to begone, to bring her who alone could give comfort to her last moments.

"Madeline," at last he said, "it shall be done. Even though I thus expose my own infamy and crime, you shall see Lady Thistleton. You say I never loved you! let this be a proof of the love which for years I have striven to overcome, but in vain. For this night, farewell; to-morrow I will return, and with me—"

She waited not for the conclusion of his sentence, but seizing his hand:

"Alas!" she cried, "before another sun has risen, Madeline will be far away. Oh! Bertram, Bertram, let not my soul thus rush into the presence of its Maker; bring her now—now! Let these hands restore the long-lost son to his bereaved mother; let my last breath confess the crime which made her a childless widow!"

Again she sank back on the hard pillow, and when once more she unclosed her eyes, Cecil was the lonely watcher by her bedside.

"Oh! mother dear," said the boy, "you are better now; he will soon be back, and then you will be happy."

"Happy!" repeated Madeline, "alas! my child, happiness in this world is no more for me. I shall die at peace: at peace with God—at peace with man! Cecil, it grows dark—so dark; light a candle, boy, and let me gaze once again on your innocent face, it will be for the last time—the last time!" she kept repeating, whilst Cecil, blinded by his tears, obeyed her wish. Then, starting up in the bed, she exclaimed: "they come! they come! Oh, God! thy holy name be praised!"

The ears of the dying woman had not deceived her. Bertram ascended the stairs, accompanied by a lady in deep mourning; again entered the sick chamber. The feeble light of the candle shone on the face of Madeline, and as Alice recognised in the ghastly visage be-

fore her the once-handsome face of her bosom friend, with a wild cry, she sank on her knees beside the bed of death.

"Oh, Madeline, Madeline! forgive me, forgive me!" "Forgive you!" said Madeline, "tis I who need forgiveness. I could not die, Alice, until I had confessed to you the crime which made thee a widow; until I had restored to you your son."

"My child! my little son!" exclaimed Lady Thistleton, "he lives, then, he lives!" and without waiting for further proof, with a cry of joy, she pressed the long-lost boy to her breast.

"Alice," continued the sufferer, as Cecil tore himself from his mother's embrace, and laid his young head beside that of the dying woman, as if she alone was all he cared for: "he is the only being who returned the love I gave. Oh! let him stay with me to the last. I took him in his infancy, as the type of the man whose breath was my very life, but whose faithlessness made me what I am!"

"No!" replied Alice, "it was not his work, it was mine! mine! I penned the fatal letter which separated you from him for ever. I placed your glove beside it, and then told him you were inconstant. Oh, Madeline! my scheme answered but too well, and he became the sufferer; he never loved me, your name was the last upon his lips."

"I know it, I know it," repeated Madeline: "and yet by my hand he died. I was the nurse who crept like a serpent into the room, and stung him at the last, and not content with the misery I had thus caused, I stole your son."

"No, no!" exclaimed Bertram, who until now had been a quiet spectator of the scene, "Madeline, you have said enough, enter not the presence of your Maker with a lie upon your lips. It was my work, mine!"

"Alas!" said Madeline, "poor Bertram, I loved thee not; but ere long the veil of death will fall between you and her who caused you to sin; the grave will soon close out from your eyes all that remains of your brother's murderer, the heart which never beat save for him alone will soon be cold, and Madeline Glandover will be forgotten." Taking the ring from her finger, she placed it on his: "take this," she said, "it was his gift, wear it for his sake—for mine." A gurgling sound in her throat prevented her from saying more, but motioning to Cecil, who, bathed in tears, still leant over her, in a scarcely audible voice she bade him wipe the death-damp from her brow.

For a few moments she remained quiet, as though in a sweet slumber; but suddenly, seizing the hands of Bertram and Alice, she started up with a piercing shriek:

"I am coming! I am coming! Cecil, all, farewell!"—and with one struggle her spirit was free. Madeline Glandover was no more.

INDIAN HONESTY.—An Indian being among his white neighbours, asked for a little tobacco to smoke, and one of them, having some loose in his pocket, gave him a handful. The day following, the Indian came back, inquiring for the donor, saying he had found a quarter of a dollar among the tobacco; being told, that as it was given him he might as well keep it, he answered, pointing to his breast—"I got a good man and a bad man here; and the good man says it is not mine, I must return it to the owner; the bad man says, Why he gave it to you, and it is your own now; the good man says, That's not right, the tobacco is yours, not the money; the bad man says, Never you mind, you got it, go buy some dram; the good man says, No, no, you must not do so; so I do not know what to do, and I think to go to sleep; but the good man and the bad man keep talking all night, and trouble me; and now I bring the money back I feel good."

CHANGES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Several changes have taken place in the House of Commons during the Session which has now closed. A day or two after the assembly of Parliament the Hon. Colonel Bernard, member for Bandon, died, and was succeeded by Mr. Bernard, his son; on the 7th of February, Captain Gladstone, R.N., the member for Devizes, died, and was succeeded by the Hon. W. W. Addington. In consequence of Sir Michael Seymour's retirement, Mr. Ferrand was, early in February, returned for the borough of Devonport. By the elevation of the Hon. Mr. Munson, to the peerage, a vacancy occurred in the representation of the borough of Reigate, and Mr. Leveson Gower was elected. Mr. Andrew Stewart resigned the representation of the borough of Cambridge, and Mr. F. S. Powell was elected. Shortly after the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Moody retired from the representation of West Somerset, and Mr. Gore Langton was elected his successor. For Lisburn Mr. Barbour was elected, in the room of Mr. Richardson, but, being unseated, Mr. Verner was elected. In February, Mr. H. W. Freeland retired from the representation of the borough of Chichester, and was succeeded by Mr. J. Abel Smith. On the 26th of May, the representation of Thetford became vacant by the elevation of the Earl of Euston to the dukedom of Grafton; Lord F. Fitzroy was elected in

his place. The Hon. General Upton, on succeeding to the Irish peerage as Viscount Templeton, rendered vacant the representation of Antrim, and Mr. O'Neill was elected. By the death of Sir G. C. Lewis, on the 14th of April, the representation of the Radnorshire boroughs became vacant; Mr. R. Green Price was elected. Mr. Hamilton in April resigned the representation of the county of Dublin, and was succeeded by his son Mr. Ion Hamilton. Early in May, Mr. O'Hagan, the Attorney-General for Ireland, was elected for Tralee, in the room of Mr. Daniel O'Connell. By the death of Mr. Western Wood, on the 17th of May, a vacancy took place in the representation of the city of London, and Mr. G. J. Goschen was elected. Late in May, Mr. Tottenham resigned the representation of New Ross, and was succeeded by Colonel Tottenham. Early in June, Sir John Arnot retired from the representation of Kinsale, and was succeeded by Sir George Colthurst. In the same month the representation of Berwick-upon-Tweed became vacant by the death of Captain Gordon; Mr. W. W. Cargill was elected. The representation of the county of Clare is at present vacant by the death of Mr. F. M. Calcott.

BLACK EYES VERSUS BLUE.

Poets have sung of a dazzling bright eye,
An orb of a jetty black hue,
Of an eagle-like eye—a proud-flashing eye,
But my heart is not with them, I cannot tell why,
For I love the soft light of the blue.

Noble and queenly the arrowy gleam
From eyes that are sable to view;
But it cannot compare with the mild, mellow beam,
The calm, gentle glimmer, the heart-love supreme,
That dwells in the depths of the blue.

The fiery black eye is the one to command,
By the fear it inspires, to subdue;
But what icy heart can the pleading withstand,
Can resist the persuasion, the wistful demand,
Implored by the soft eye of blue?

The lightning-shaft rending the storm-clouds on high;
The heavens all darkened to view;
O that, that resembles the angry black eye!
But the mild ray of sunlight, the clear summer sky,
This, this is the type of the blue!

H. C. A.

THE HUSBAND'S SECRET.

CHAPTER I.

It was a bleak night in midwinter. The storm raged fearfully without, but in the parlour occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Woolcroft only peace and love and plenty had their domain. So at least any superficial observer would have judged. A fine bright fire lighted up the hearth, diffusing a ruddy warmth and glow throughout the apartment, which, with its damask hangings and pictured walls, and traces of cultivation everywhere, seemed a very temple of comfort and serene enjoyment.

Mrs. Woolcroft was a woman to be admired. Not a beauty, by any means, but a neat, compact, rosy, plump little woman, with smooth satiny hair and bright dark eyes which in a merry mood flashed with a brilliant light. There were those, it is true, who averred that those same orbs kept other and more sinister rays for occasions; that Mrs. Woolcroft's temper was scintillant as well as her eyes; and that, moreover, her anger, once invoked, was very difficult to appease. Still, on all ordinary occasions, she was certainly an amiable woman; and hitherto, perhaps because he was a mild and judicious man, Mr. Woolcroft had found little difficulty in being master of his own house.

"What a storm this is," said Mrs. Woolcroft, as the wind drove a shower of sleet furiously against the pane, "I am so thankful you got home before it set in so boisterously. I pity the poor and homeless on such a night as this!"

Mr. Woolcroft sighed, for which his wife saw no real occasion, but before she had time to question him concerning its cause, the door-bell rang furiously.

"Who can it be?" exclaimed Mrs. Woolcroft. "I hope it isn't anybody for you. I'm always expecting something to happen to that bridge on such a night as this."

At that instant the door opened, and Bridget announced that a man wished to see Mr. Woolcroft in the hall.

That gentleman stepped quickly out, and held a short, whispered conference with the messenger. When he re-entered the parlour there was a troubled, anxious expression upon his countenance, and he said, as he buttoned his overcoat and tied on his muffler:

"I am obliged to go out, Marsh. I may not return till late. Don't sit up for me, and make yourself as comfortable as you can while I am gone."

His manner was kind, but he seemed preoccupied,

and—Mrs. Woolcroft recalled the fact afterwards—he did not once look at her as she spoke.

"What!" she exclaimed, with the haste peculiar to a loving, trustful woman, "is it about that dreadful bridge? I do wish you would sell out your stock in it, and give up the whole thing. I am sure it will be the death of you yet."

"Well," he replied, as he stooped to kiss her, for though they had been married five years, and had already two children, they had not forgotten to be tender toward each other, "take care of yourself, and don't worry about me. I shall come back all right;" and with that he was gone.

Mrs. Woolcroft resumed her seat by the table, thinking of James, her wifely heart following him out into the cold and sleet and darkness; but presently it flashed across her mind that after all he had not said that he was going to the bridge; and if he were, why should he anticipate so long an absence? Then she remembered the sigh and the preoccupation which she had noticed before, and sundry little incidents that she thought nothing of at the time came back to her mind, and she began to wonder if it really was the bridge business after all which had taken him out.

The little clock on the mantel chimed nine; the storm increased, and still her husband did not return. By this time Mrs. Woolcroft had gone over all the years of their acquaintance, and especially the happy years of their married life, and asked herself if it were possible that this man, so tender, so true, could after all be keeping a secret from her—a strange, uncomfortable secret, that clouded his brow and took him out on such boisterous, tempestuous nights as this. Ten o'clock found tears in her eyes; but whether tears of tenderness or regret she could not have told. At eleven, with heavy heart and a feeling of loneliness and desertion for which she could not account, she put away her work, piled fresh coal upon the grate, and prepared to retire.

Suddenly she was startled by the sound of a carriage which apparently stopped before the door, and the almost simultaneous ringing of the bell. Mrs. Woolcroft was a fearless woman, and without waiting for Bridget, she opened the door herself. The darkness outside, contrasted with the brilliant light within, nearly blinded her, but she got a faint glimpse of a man wrapped in waterproofs, who suddenly thrust a basket into her hand, saying simply: "From Mr. Woolcroft, madam," and then retired in haste. Before a second thought could cross her mind, the carriage had driven away, and she was left alone. Closing the door, into which the storm was driving furiously, she set down the basket, which seemed heavy, and began to consider what it might mean. Bridget, who had come up from the basement in time to hear the man's remarks, took it up and said:

"Shall I take it into the parlour, madam, or carry it below?"

"Let us see first what it contains," said Mrs. Woolcroft; and stooping, she pulled away the wrappers, and disclosed a baby—a real, live baby—a tiny, wee thing, with great blue eyes that were slowly opening to the light, and a red face that indicated no very great age in the child.

"A babe, shure!" exclaimed Bridget, with uplifted hands. "And what possesses the maister to be sending home a babe in such a storm as this?"

"A baby, indeed!" ejaculated Mrs. Woolcroft, faintly, as with busy fingers she pulled over the wrappers in the basket, for Bridget had already raised the "babe" triumphantly aloft, and was scanning its features by the light of the hall lantern. It was simply dressed, and could not, it seemed, be over a week or two old, even if of that age.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Woolcroft, at length, "here it is; of course there is a note—there always is."

But this proved to be no illegible, illiterate scrawl, asserting that the baby is of highly respectable parents, who are forced by unhappy complications of family affairs to abandon their offspring, and beg that it may be tenderly cared for by the benevolent strangers to whom it is consigned. Quite otherwise. It read simply thus:

"MY DEAR WIFE,—I cannot be home to-night, nor can I set any time for my return, further than that I shall not probably be delayed more than a day or two. Take good care of the baby till I come. It will have to be brought up by hand, I suppose, but you know more about that than I do. Kiss the children for papa, and believe me, as ever, truly and affectionately yours,
"JAMES WOOLCROFT."

"Oh! ah! yes!" exclaimed Mrs. Woolcroft, in utter amazement. Then looking at Bridget, who stood by the hall stove holding the "babe," and evidently waiting for an explanation, she said:

"The child belongs to some friend of Mr. Woolcroft, and his mother, it seems, is dead. Mr. Woolcroft will go home with the corpse, which will take him a day or two perhaps. And meantime we are to take care of the baby till a nurse can be found."

Oh, the tact of woman at putting a face on affairs! Bridget, of course, pretended to be satisfied with this

explanation, though the truth was the whole thing was perfectly transparent to her.

"Oh! well, then, and shall I be warming a bit of milk for the poor little thing that has lost its mammy?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Woolcroft, absently. "Yes, Bridget," after a pause. "Of course it must be fed, and, let me see, I have some of little Marah's clothes that will fit it. It must be undressed. Well, bring it into the parlour, and we will see about it. It's a great undertaking, Bridget, to care for such a little helpless thing as this."

"Of course—don't I know that?" said Bridget. "Will it be after staying here long, missis?"

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Woolcroft. "Not more than a few days, I presume." And then she relapsed into silence.

The little creature who was the subject of those remarks, and who had hitherto been remarkably quiet, now began to give vent to her hunger, in the way of several successive cries, short and sharp, but each one more imperative than the last.

"There—there," said Mrs. Woolcroft: "give it to me, Bridget, and hurry and warm the milk. However shall we manage it, I wonder—some children are so bad about feeding."

And while Bridget was absent, Mrs. Woolcroft laid the baby tenderly across her bosom, and cuddling it and hushing it in true motherly fashion, walked about the room, less to quiet the child, who was too young to care for the walking, than to compose her own agitated mind. But the baby grew more clamorous, and at last all other thoughts were put to rout by the absorbing one of quieting the little thing. It seemed hours till Bridget came.

"And now, with a little supper," said Mrs. Woolcroft. "I hope we shall be able to get it to sleep."

But the baby required more than a "little" supper, and it was past twelve o'clock before it had shut its great blue eyes, and gone wandering into the land of dreams.

When Bridget went down-stairs, she heard a tap at the window, and going thither, found Margaret, from "next door," who was just bidding her cousin "good-bye."

"And is the baby here?" asked Margaret.

"Shure it is, and she's the sweetest little jewel in the world, with the very eyes of little Marah, anent sure."

"Fore Heaven, now is it so?" asked Margaret, with uplifted hands. And Bridget assented that it was.

Of course the neighbourhood did not lack for gossip the next day.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. WOOLCROFT slept very little that night, for besides that her new inmate required attention from time to time, her mind was fully occupied with serious thoughts concerning her husband's inexplicable conduct. At times she grew indignant, and resolved, as soon as it was light, to send the child off to the proper authorities; but reflection convinced her that, as it had been sent home by her husband, the public officers might very possibly refuse to have anything to do with the matter. A dozen other modes of procedure, all equally spirited, suggested themselves; but after all, whatever her suspicions might be, she could not be certain that her husband would not return at the end of the prescribed time, and explain matters to her satisfaction. In that event, any show of present indignation might have its embarrassments.

Towards morning her mind grew calmer, and reflecting upon the uniform kindness and fidelity of her husband, her accustomed faith in him returned, and she assured herself that when he came back, this mystery—doubtless such a one as it would have been impossible to have explained in a brief note, like that which the basket had contained—would no doubt be cleared up. Till that time, she must exercise patience, and put a good face on the matter to those of her acquaintances who might happen to call.

But the morning brought new annoyances. It seemed as if the whole neighbourhood were advised of Mrs. Woolcroft's perplexities, (as indeed they were) and were bent upon making the matter as serious as possible for her. From the earliest moment proper for calling, the house was besieged with ladies who just ran in on an errand,—to borrow a magazine, or return a sleeve pattern, but who could on no account be induced to leave till they had had a glimpse of the strange baby. Of course it was pronounced a little beauty—such fine eyes, so like those of Mrs. Woolcroft's own children, really astonishingly like little Marah's. It required all Mrs. Woolcroft's philosophy to meet these ladies with equanimity; and to tell the truth, before night she wished the baby and its parents, whoever they might be, in the bottom of the sea, or at some other equally insalubrious place. The little thing proved troublesome, too, as most children do under such circumstances, and altogether Mrs. Woolcroft's nerves were severely tried by the time her liege-lord made his appearance,

which was not until late in the afternoon of the third day.

When he entered the back parlour, where Mrs. Woolcroft sat with the baby, his brow was troubled. He kissed his wife, however, and the children, who clamoured for an embrace, and then quietly bade the little ones run down-stairs to Bridget.

Then he walked straight to the cradle, and looking into it with a solicitous countenance, asked:

"And how is the baby?"

Mrs. Woolcroft's lip trembled, but she "made an effort" for serenity.

"Oh, she is getting on well enough, but, James, where did you get the little thing?"

"I took it from its mother."

"Of course; but who is its mother?"

Mrs. Woolcroft's soul was in her eyes. Mr. Woolcroft's eyes were still fixed on the cradle.

"An old acquaintance of mine, who has fallen into trouble. I cannot tell you more about it, Marah, but I am sure if you knew all the circumstances as well as I do, your gentle heart would bleed as mine does for this poor child, and you would not regard the care of it for a few months, or perhaps years, as a burden."

There was a curious commotion in Mrs. Woolcroft's feelings. However, she still strove for serenity.

"And is this all that I am to know of the matter?"

Mr. Woolcroft hesitated. He looked at his wife gently and pityingly, and replied, slowly—

"For the present—yes."

"It is outrageous!" she exclaimed. "No man can possibly be justified in keeping such a secret from his wife. It makes no difference who the woman is, if she were your own sister. But of course she is not your sister, for in that case there would be no possible reason why I should not be trusted with the secret."

Mr. Woolcroft's face flushed a little, but he remained imperturbable.

"Marah," he said, "will you try to calm yourself, and exercise your reason for a moment? Did you ever know me to do an unjust or unreasonable thing? to treat you with any show of cruelty or unkindness?"

"But this is the utmost limit of both. It is cruel beyond degree."

"I am aware that it may seem to you, but I hoped that you would nevertheless be able to have faith in me."

"But you do not intend that I shall keep this child, without knowing to whom it belongs?"

"I cannot say how long it may be necessary for us to take charge of it, but it may be some months, or possibly longer. I know that it will add to your cares, but I am not unreasonable. I intend to procure a suitable nurse for it, and beyond the responsibility for its welfare, your troubles may be, in that way, lightened rather than increased, since a good nurse can look after two or three children almost as well as one."

"James Woolcroft, are you crazy?" All the combustible elements of Mrs. Woolcroft's nature were now ablaze. "If I had had a dozen children of my own, it would always have been the same story. You could not afford to keep a nurse. But now, simply because you are afraid to trust me with this little foundling, who may be—anything disgraceful and unfit to associate with my children, for aught I know, you must hire a nurse. I will never consent to it, Mr. Woolcroft, never, never."

Mr. Woolcroft was silent for a few moments.

"Marah," he commenced, "until this moment you have had no right ever to reproach me with any want of confidence. I had hoped that you could trust me for a while."

"No woman in her senses would trust a man in a case like this. If there was nothing criminal in the matter, you certainly could trust me. Are you afraid that I shall gossip? You know that it is not my nature, Mr. Woolcroft."

The husband made no reply. Possibly he had none to make, and suddenly the babe woke from its sleep and began to cry. Mrs. Woolcroft left her work and lifted the little thing in her arms to soothe it.

"The baby isn't to blame, I suppose," she said, in a low tone, "and I haven't a heart to see it suffer, but if I had hold of its mother, I think I should manage to let her know my opinion of her."

Mr. Woolcroft sat in deep and anxious thought for a few minutes.

"Well, Marah," he said, at length, "I have considered the whole matter, and I see no alternative. The child must not be suffered to die, and, under the circumstances, I dare not entrust it to a stranger, with no interested person to oversee matters. It will therefore remain here. I know that you are too kind and too conscientious to neglect it, whatever may be your feelings towards me, and I shall certainly see to it that you do not have too much trouble with it thrown upon your hands. If you choose to go on good terms with me, it remains with you to manifest it; if not, I must bear it."

Mrs. Woolcroft quivered from head to foot with outraged pride and love. But from this quiet but firm decision she knew there was no appeal.

"I should like to know what I am to say to the neighbours?" she asked.

"It is not a matter which concerns the neighbours," was the reply, in a vexed tone.

"Indeed," said Mrs. Woolcroft, in a rising voice, "it does concern them. It is a scandal to the whole street. I cannot possibly reconcile my conscience to such doings. Either you must give me some satisfactory explanation of the affair, or I will not put my hand to it. I will have nothing to do with the child."

Again Mr. Woolcroft was silent. It was a troublesome business. After a few minutes, he put on his hat and coat and walked out. When he returned, he brought with him a respectable-looking, middle-aged Scotchwoman, whom he called Janet. Walking straight up to his wife, he took her hand in his, and looked her steady in the eye.

"Marah," he said, in a firm but not unkindly tone, "do you remember that on a certain day you held my hand as you do now, and promised, before God and the witnesses assembled, to 'love, honour, and obey' me, till death should part us?"

He waited for a reply. It did not come. He proceeded:

"I do not know that I ever asserted my right to command you before. But now I do assert it most positively. This woman is the child's nurse. She will stay in this house, take care of this child to the best of her ability, and I command you to see that in nothing is her duty neglected. You will treat both woman and child with respect, and report to me daily the condition and needs of the child."

So saying, he bade Janet follow him to the bed-chamber, in which he installed her with the child, and then left the house. Perhaps it is not much to be wondered at that when Mrs. Woolcroft heard the door close behind him, she burst into tears.

CHAPTER III.

FOR the next week a very deceitful calm prevailed in the Woolcroft home. Janet, who was possessed of a good stock of Scotch sense, managed her affairs with discretion. The child, naturally delicate, thrived finely under her care. As for Mr. and Mrs. Woolcroft, they found it convenient to say as little to each other as might be, beyond the conversation entailed by household affairs. At the end of that time another stone was dropped somewhat suddenly into the well of Mrs. Woolcroft's placidity.

Mr. Woolcroft came home to dinner one day with the usual intelligence that business of a pressing nature would require his absence for some weeks, and he wished his trunk packed for the evening train.

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Woolcroft, with that constrained intensity of manner which precludes a storm.

"It is of no consequence," replied Mr. Woolcroft. "I shall probably be absent about a month. You need not be alarmed if you do not hear from me in that time."

It was a sore trial for poor Mrs. Woolcroft. Had she not always been a true and affectionate wife? Had she ever, by thought, word or deed, deserved such treatment as this at the hands of her husband? Was it in the nature of a human heart, of a feminine human heart, to endure it? All these questions she asked, volubly and vociferously, with a great deal of tautology, of emphatic repetition and fanciful illustration, which we have spared the reader. Mr. Woolcroft, as usual, looked troubled, but said nothing, or at least nothing satisfactory, and when the time arrived for the evening train, he took leave of his family, and was gone, no one knew whither.

By one of those coincidences with which Fate delights to try the souls of mortals, it seemed that with this second unaccountable and most vexatious absence of Mr. Woolcroft, the real trials and aggravations of his injured wife were to commence. First, the baby, which had hitherto been tolerably healthy, though of delicate constitution, grew ill. Its food proved deleterious, and there was no end of care and labour by day, and watching and anxiety by night. Of course, in this extremity, the neighbours all delighted to proffer their services, and the nursery was daily and nightly the scene of calls and inquisitions and condolences which were beyond measure trying to the feelings of the injured and embarrassed wife. The month was drawing to a close, and still there came no news from Mr. Woolcroft. His wife by this time was really suffering, from the combined effects of care and excitement. The neighbourhood was in a turmoil of surprise and indignation, and as the baby improved and seemed at last beyond the danger of suffering for want of care, Mrs. Woolcroft reached that point where both she and her friends considered that forbearance was no longer a virtue. Janet had a good home, to which it was decided that the child should be conveyed. The only objection was that it was in a very unhealthy part of the town, a quarter, in fact, where several infantile epidemics were then known to be raging.

"But the child is not my child," said Mrs. Woolcroft, "and I cannot feel that my responsibility goes any further than to provide comfortably for it."

On a given day, therefore, a carriage was called, and Janet and her charge were prepared for their exodus.

But Fate seemed to have the baby in keeping. On the steps they met Mr. Woolcroft, that moment returned from his journey.

"Where are you going, Janet?" he asked.

An explanation ensued. The consequence was that the carriage was dismissed, and without further words, Janet returned to the nursery, took off her things, and commenced again the old routine of duty.

Mrs. Woolcroft was helpless. She had learned the fact by this time. She met her husband meekly, and inquiring after his health, made no reference to affairs, further than to give him a short account of baby's progress. Mr. Woolcroft seemed touched by his wife's submission. He kissed her tenderly, but there was an air of painful preoccupation about him which not even her smiles and enforced cheerfulness could banish.

After tea that evening, Mrs. Woolcroft drew the table with the shaded lamp before the fire, arranged the sofa in the cosiest nook, and seating herself thereon, begged her husband to take his old place beside her. He obeyed, happy, apparently, to resume even outwardly their old relations.

Naturally the conversation drifted towards the events which had occurred during his absence; the news of the neighbourhood, the health and progress of the children, and at last, without any undue excitement, Mrs. Woolcroft gently detailed all her trials with the strange baby, which, queerly enough, was known as yet by no other name than baby. Mr. Woolcroft listened with tender pity and approval. He drew his wife to his heart, and kissed her with honest and deep-felt sympathy.

"Oh, James!" she murmured at last, and lifted her eyes, on whose lashes the great tears quivered, to his face.

It was hard to resist the mute appeal, but Mr. Woolcroft only heaved a sigh, and stooping, kissed again the dumb, half-parted lips.

"By the way, Marah," he said, hoping to change the conversation, "I heard to-day that Clara was in town."

Mrs. Woolcroft's face darkened. Clara was her younger and once tenderly-beloved sister. A year ago she had left her home with a young man, a wild, spendthrift youth, the only son of a man of great wealth, but disinherited on account of his evil courses. By what means he had contrived to meet and win so pure and lovely a girl as Clara Hastings no one could imagine. The only thing certainly known was that she had eloped with him, whether as his wife or otherwise it was impossible to prove. Mrs. Woolcroft had been deeply incensed at her sister's conduct, and had forbidden her husband ever to mention the poor girl in her presence. Therefore it was that at the intelligence he had just announced, all the tenderness faded out of her countenance, and the old impenetrable mask of steely firmness re-appeared.

"James," she said, "you must not talk to me of that woman. I have expressed my wishes in the most positive manner, and in this thing they shall not be disregarded. She has brought shame and disgrace upon herself and all belonging to her. She is worse than dead to me."

"But if she were suffering?"

"It makes no difference."

"You loved her once."

"James, I will hear no more. She and all her affairs are equally disgusting to me. Let me hear no more concerning them."

Mr. Woolcroft strove in vain to find some trace of tenderness, or at least of pity and regret, in his wife's face. Her affections were intense and over-mastering; so also were her hatreds. There was no trace of pity left in her soul for her erring sister. It would be a blessing if any event should ever pierce that steely armour in which she sometimes encased her soul, and render it vulnerable to the shafts of love.

Silently Mr. Woolcroft revolved the matter in his mind. It was half-an-hour before either of them spoke again.

CHAPTER IV.

SEVERAL weeks passed. Mrs. Woolcroft had given up her useless opposition to her husband. It had been a hard struggle, but it was over at length, and never had the intercourse between the two been marked with more of tenderness and trust, than at present. Mrs. Woolcroft was gentler even than of old, for no soul can pass triumphantly through so fiery an ordeal without becoming refined in thought and feeling. To her husband it seemed that she walked in a sort of halo, and nightly as he drew her to his bosom, he felt that never, in the bloom and beauty of her girlhood, was she half as dear to him as now.

The change in Mrs. Woolcroft was too noticeable not to excite remark, and its influence upon the neighbourhood was extremely beneficial. Even the gossips,

seeing that her internal quiet and serenity were restored, forgot to be censorious, and gradually the excitement which baby's advent had caused died away, and was forgotten.

Baby herself was growing a favourite; even Mrs. Woolcroft loved her tenderly, and her husband often smiled as he saw with what motherly gentleness she attended to all her little wants. In fact, a stranger would never have suspected that the child was not her own.

"Marah," said Mr. Woolcroft one evening, as spring advanced, "you would hardly care to part with baby now."

"Part with her!" exclaimed Mrs. Woolcroft, in alarm, and turning a shade paler; I hope you do not think of sending her away?"

"It may become necessary."

"Oh! James, you are not going to take my baby away from me just now, when I am getting to love her so?"

"I suppose her mother will claim her soon, unless some arrangement can be made."

It was a trying moment for Mrs. Woolcroft. Of course she still longed to know the baby's history. Not now from mere curiosity, or, least of all, from any want of faith in her husband, but because the little thing had grown dear to her, and she was desirous of knowing something by what tenure she held her. Possibly, she thought, the time might have come when Mr. Woolcroft would enlighten her, for he had always promised some time to gratify her curiosity. Indeed, if he did not intend to do so, it was cruel to make such an allusion—the first of the kind he had ever voluntarily made. But Mrs. Woolcroft was possessed of true womanly pride. The knowledge which had been so long withheld, she would not now ask for. So she held her peace.

There was silence for a few moments.

"Would you like to know something of baby's history?" asked Mr. Woolcroft.

Mrs. Woolcroft laid the sleeping infant in its cradle, and kissing its sweet face, said nothing till she had hushed it and folded it gently in its little blanket. Then she went and sat down by her husband, and placing her hand in his, to indicate her perfect and peaceful trust, looked up with smiling face, and waited in silence.

There was a tear in Mr. Woolcroft's eye, and his voice trembled a little as he commenced his story.

"I cannot tell you all the details to-night," he said, "for it is a long and in some respects a painful story. The mother of the child is an old and dearly beloved friend. You will not suspect me of any unfaithfulness, when I say that next to you she is the dearest female friend I have. I have no sister, but there were years in which she was dear to me as a sister. If you have not heard me mention her name, it is because circumstances have made the mention of it painful. She was married; her husband fell into ill-health; they became miserably poor, and at last, in the hope of being able to find some light employment, at which he might earn a meagre subsistence he left her. He was prostrated with a fever, and it was months till she heard from him. Accident made me acquainted with her circumstances when this little babe was but a day old. Of course I strove to relieve her. On the night when I was summoned so unexpectedly to her bedside, I found her a raving maniac. The cares and troubles of her situation had driven her mad. Of course I could not leave the child to suffer, so I sent it home, and myself conveyed the mother to an asylum."

"After a time there seemed to be a hope that a search diligently prosecuted might bring to light the whereabouts of the father, and lead to his restoration to certain rights, of which previous misfortunes had deprived him. It was then that I left you for the second time. I was successful; at least I found him the inmate of a hospital, though convalescent, and to-day I hear that the young mother is released from the asylum perfectly well. She has rejoined her husband, and is of course anxious that her child should be restored to her."

Mrs. Woolcroft was silent for a moment. If she waited for a further explanation, if she desired still to know the reason why her husband had not sooner confided to her this strange story, she had learned too thoroughly the lesson of submission to ask any questions. Doubtless, in good time, it would all be revealed.

"What a sad history," she said, at length, seeing that Mr. Woolcroft did not resume. "Has the poor creature no relatives?"

"None. At least none who would succour her in her distress."

"And she was a good, lovable woman?"

"One of the sweetest and purest that I ever knew."

"How shameful!" Mrs. Woolcroft's warm instincts were fired at once. "Where is she now?"

"At the—hotel."

"May I go and see her?"

"Would you like her to come and see you?"

"Indeed I would. How much pleasure I shall take in showing her how her baby is improved. She has thriven under our care, hasn't she?"

"Indeed she has. The poor mother owes you the warmest gratitude, and I assure you that she is only too anxious to express her thanks to you."

"How much I shall dislike to give baby up! Will she be carried very far away? Where will they live?"

"They are looking for a house in town."

"Why not let them come here—if they are such pleasant people you know? Then we could keep Janet, and really I don't know how I shall do without her."

"That is what I was thinking of, but almost feared to propose."

Mrs. Woolcroft was all enthusiasm. She could hardly wait till morning before carrying the proposed arrangement into effect.

"Directly after breakfast, James," she said, "you must go for them. Baby shall be dressed in her prettiest. How glad I am that she has nice clothes—just as nice as our own children ever had. Dear little thing! and we shan't have to part with her, after all."

Mr. Woolcroft smiled and kissed his wife. Then he took out the evening paper, and she settled herself to her stitching, thinking all the while how proud she should be to deliver over her little charge in such excellent condition.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning, Mrs. Woolcroft announced to Janet, as calmly as could be, that baby's papa and mamma were coming to see her, and that therefore she must speedily be made as charming as possible. The lady herself superintended the brushing of the soft hair and the tying on of the blue ribbons, and made sure that a hearty breakfast and a nice nap should put her small ladyship into the best possible humour. All this accomplished, she went quietly down into the parlour, where awaiting her guests, she fell into a reverie. It was this poor young creature's sad history which filled her mind. She dwelt upon all the painful details till her warmest sympathies were aroused. Perhaps, too, some old tenderness of her own outcast sister was thrilled into new life. Certain it is that she was thinking over the sweet and happy scenes of their innocent childhood, and wondering with a secret and vain regret, that the lives and fortunes of two who had once loved each other so dearly, should be so widely different, when her husband's step at the entrance recalled her. Her guests had arrived.

Mrs. Woolcroft stepped to the door of the adjoining room to give the last look at baby and warn Janet, and when she returned, the lady, closely veiled, was just crossing the threshold. Without a thought of introduction, she rushed toward her, and taking her hand, gave her a hearty kiss. It was not till she stepped back to offer her hand to the gentleman, that she noticed the young mother's face.

A deathly whiteness overspread her features.

"Clara, Clara Hastings," she murmured, faintly.

"Yes, your sister Clara," said a soft voice, appealingly, and Mrs. Woolcroft, looking into her husband's face for an instant, stepped forward again, and wound her arms about her sister's neck, and wept silent but scalding tears.

There were no dry eyes in the room, and for a moment no one could speak. But Mr. Woolcroft motioned to Janet, who appeared at the doorway, and baby was brought forward. This aroused the mother, and Mrs. Woolcroft, looking at the slight, pale young man, to whom she had not yet spoken, took his hand, and said, in her gentlest tones:

"My sister—my brother—this is your child."

The felicitations were many and joyful; even baby smiled, and put up her little hands to pull the strange lady's ringlets, and when Mr. Norton put out his finger to her, seized it in her little fat hands in a way that delighted him.

The reconciliation was perfect. After dinner, the two sisters retired to the nursery, where many things were talked over and explained. All the mystery of Clara's marriage was unravelled. The promises of reformation which her husband had made her previously had been literally kept, and now, his father being dead, he had come into possession of a small property which the old gentleman had, in a fit of relenting, bequeathed him. Clara's health, though not yet permanently restored, bade fair to improve, and she looked forward to years of happiness, which should fully compensate her for all the suffering which she had endured.

But Mrs. Woolcroft had other tears to shed. That night, in the retirement of their own room, she laid her head upon her husband's shoulder, and wept drops of mingled shame and sorrow. It is needless to record that they were kissed away, and that henceforward no shadow of doubt or distrust ever crept between them.

The boarding arrangement was only continued until Mr. Norton could build a house upon the lot adjoining Mr. Woolcroft's, and make arrangements to remove thither with his wife and "baby."

She is "baby" still, though now a flaxen-haired maiden of sixteen, the pride of her parents, and the

especial pet of Mr. Woolcroft, who not unfrequently, in a moment of tenderness, calls her not baby, but my baby, and I never heard that either parent ever rebuked him therefor.

R. H. S.

THE SCIENTIFIC DETECTION OF FORGERIES.

THE methods used by the forger are different in character and in degree. In some instances he imitates simply the writing and signature of another person, as at the bottom of a will, deed, or other document.

This capacity of imitation is possessed by few, and a quick eye may soon be able on comparison of two specimens of writing to determine a real as distinguished from a forged hand. The points to be observed in this research have reference, first, to what is called the strength of the writing, for no two hands bear on the pen with equal force; next, as to the angle of each letter in relation to the line on which it is written; thirdly, to the distance of one letter from another; fourthly, to the angles of the letters themselves; fifthly, to the way in which certain letters are dotted or crossed; and lastly, to the mode in which long letters are made to terminate.

Assuming that in any given case where a comparison has to be instituted there is so much difficulty in the way that the naked eye fails to make the determination, recourse is then to be had to enlargement of the writing by means of a powerful lens. This enlargement brings out in unmistakable relief any differences which may exist between two specimens of writing, and we ourselves knew of an example in which the false signature of a gentleman was detected by this method, he himself having been unable to affirm on common observation that the signature was a forgery. It is to be specially remembered, however, in conducting the inquiry, that not one nor even two differences are sufficient to mark the distinction; but if in any given case there is a combination of differences, even though these may not be presented in each letter, the evidence becomes decisive by accumulation of details, and of course the more decisive according to the number of points of difference. This is brought out very easily by a simple experiment. Write down on a piece of paper a single word twice over, then let another person copy the first word in imitation, with the strictest attention to details. To the eye the distinction between the words from the same hand may seem as great as between the originals and the imitation. Now, however, with a powerful magnifying glass, increase the size of the first original word and of the copied word, say ten times, and then analyze each by the six points given above. It will be found that in every letter there are at least four essential points of difference. This analysis concluded, turn to the second word written by the same hand, and although differences may be presented in respect the size of the letters, the analysis will yield the characteristics the same, in the main, in all the details.

The detection of forged signatures by this mechanical analytical method is so simple and so perfect in its results, that we wonder it has not been universally adopted in legal investigations. By mathematical measurements it might be brought to such perfection as to be demonstrative, and to yield evidence far more valid than that of circumstances, on which life often is sentenced. In the present notorious case, for instance, in which a man has accused himself of forging his father's name, the doubt respecting the forgery could be settled with wonderful certainty, if by the side of the assumed forged writing, any scrap from the pen of the late Mr. Roupell containing the same letters could be placed and analysed. If his own signature could be obtained, this of course would be so much the more satisfactory for the investigation, but it is not essential; that is to say, the same letters in other words would answer the same purpose, the rule being that when once the handwriting is formed, the same hand makes the same letters with an exactitude of repetition which even its possessor does not appreciate; and which none can imitate with so much fidelity as to defy detection when the letters are magnified.

Such were the facts and the suggestions we placed before the public nearly eleven months ago. Had they been acted upon they would have cleared away many difficulties: at least we should now be able to say: "The most accurate possible investigation has been made, and the result, negative in character, is sufficiently conclusive to show that no more can be elicited by the comparison of a real with the assumed false signature;" as it is, we are left to report that a trial extending over many days has ended in a discharge of the jury without a verdict, the scientific investigation of the main question, the reality of the signature, having never been touched.

It may not yet be too late to fill up so important an omission; and if it is not, we can assure those who are interested in the matter, that there is work before them that will repay their labour. If they may be allowed to photograph a true signature of old Roupell, and the assumed forged signature: and if, having obtained these, they take copies of each, and project them on a scale ten or fifteen times enlarged, so that the angles of all

the letters may be determined; if they will then analyse each letter, and calculate up the facts by the rules we have supplied, they will arrive as near as human intelligence can at present lead them to an absolute result. They may be able to say, these handwritings are the same; or, they are not the same; or, that the most rigid analysis fails to detect whether they are or are not the same. Any one of these answers would be definite and satisfactory. At the present moment there is no answer at all.—*Social Science Review*.

WONDERS OF SLEEP.

If a man fall asleep in the neighbourhood of a poppy-field, and the wind blow toward him, he becomes narcotized, and would die, if the country people, who are well aware of the circumstance, did not bring him to the next well or stream, and empty pitcher after pitcher of water on his face and body. Dr. Appenheimer, during his residence in Turkey, owed his life to this simple and efficacious treatment. Dr. Graves, from whom this anecdote is quoted, also reports the case of a gentleman thirty years of age, who, from long continued sleepiness, was reduced to a complete living skeleton, unable to stand on his legs. It was partly owing to a disease, but chiefly to the abuse of opium, until at last, unable to pursue his business, he sank into abject poverty and woe. Dr. Reid mentions a friend of his, who, whenever anything occurred to distress him, soon became drowsy, and fell asleep.

A student at Edinburgh, upon hearing suddenly of the unexpected death of a near relative, threw himself on his bed, and almost instantaneously, amid the glare of noonday, sank into a profound slumber. Another person, reading to one of his dearest friends stretched on his deathbed, fell asleep, and with the book still in his hand, went on reading, utterly unconscious of what he was doing. A woman at Hamade slept seventeen or eighteen hours a day for fifteen years. Another is recorded to have slept once four days. Dr. Macnish mentions a woman who spent three-fourths of her life in sleep; and Dr. Elliottson quotes a case of a young lady who slept for six weeks and recovered. The venerable St. Augustine, of Hippo, prudently divided his hours into three parts—eight to be devoted to sleep, eight to meditation, and eight to converse with the world.

Madmen are reported, particularly, in the Eastern hemisphere, to become furiously vigilant during the full of the moon, more especially when the deteriorized rays of its polarized light are permitted to fall into their apartments; hence the name of lunatics. There certainly is greater proneness to disease during sleep than in the waking state, for those who pass the night in the Campagna di Roma inevitably become infected with its noxious air; while travellers who go through without stopping escape the miasma. Intense cold produces sleep, and those who perish in the snow, sleep on till the sleep of death.

THE pythoness at the Zoological Gardens died a few days ago. It will be remembered that the defunct serpent created a deal of conversation last year, during during her incubatory but unproductive labours.

A MISERLY old woman, named Bell, has been found starved to death in her house at Newcastle. She had hoarded about £200, and cartloads of rubbish that none but a miser would have valued.

AN extensive flour-miller at Hebden Bridge, near Manchester, was fined £10 for having in his mill upwards of a ton of alum for the purpose of mixing the same with his flour.

A VESSEL that has arrived at Falmouth reports the capture and destruction of two fine North American vessels by Captain Semmes, of the Confederate cruiser Florida. One of the vessels is said to have had bar silver on board to the value of £20,000.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERY AT ALGIERS.—A subterranean chamber, apparently constructed as a place of sepulchre, has just been discovered at Algiers in digging the foundations of the new college. Some handsome glass and earthenware vases were found inside. Access to the excavation was obtained by a trap fastened with a bronze lock, a ring of the same metal serving to raise it.

GAME PROSPECTS.—The shooting prospects both in the highlands of Perthshire and Argyllshire continue to improve as the season advances. On all the moors the young broods of grouse, which number from eight to ten birds each, are in splendid condition, and will afford capital sport. Several of the hills have been tested during the past week by gamekeepers and watchers, and all agree in regard to the abundance of grouse and other kinds of game. On some of the higher ranges, fears are beginning to be entertained that the late-hatched conveyors of grouse and black game are suffering from the want of water, for the springs and small hill burns are dry, owing to the long-continued and excessive drought. The accounts from all the forests were never more encouraging, and

both deer and fawns have improved at a rapid rate under the influence of the dry, warm weather. It is reported that fine antlers are unusually numerous in all the Highland forests, and royal heads will also be plentiful.

INDIAN ANTIQUITIES.—Colonel Cunningham, the well-known Orientalist, who was appointed by Lord Canning to act as Government archaeologist, notices with interest two full-sized statues of elephants in black stone, and two human statues in red stone, discovered while clearing away the debris in the palace at Delhi. The statues are broken, but unique in Hindu sculpture. They represent a Hindu, squatting, with a head-dress such as Rajpoot chiefs wear.

OUR readers will remember that last autumn the newspapers contained a report of the death of Lord Byron's grandson, who, though a Peer of the realm, was earning his livelihood as an artisan in a private dockyard. The noble shipwright left a sister and a brother, the latter of whom claims the Barony of Wentworth through his mother, Lord Byron's daughter, Ada, who married the Earl of Lovelace. The claim was heard before the House of Lords Committee for Privileges, and has not yet been decided.

It is said that Rothschild possesses a million millions, but that compared with others he is poor, at least, so it pleases the good people of Paris to state, for they have just heard that there exists in India a nabob worth a trillion, which represented in figures would be 1,000,000,000,000. To count this sum coin by coin, the coin being a franc, at the rate of 200 a minute, and working twelve hours a day, it would occupy 19,325 years and 519 days. It is suggested this nabob should be induced to visit Paris, where a woman's chief delight is to ruin a man; in this case, however, it would take many to ruin him, and there is proverbially safety in numbers.

THE old feudal pile of Hurst Castle, which has for ages defended the entrance of the Needles, is to be used in future merely as a magazine, and both above and below it double-tier casemate batteries are intended to be erected, armed with guns of the heaviest calibre that can be produced. The guns will be laid *à fleur d'eau*, like the batteries of the Dardanelles, to strike vessels on the horizontal line; and these forts will be supported by other batteries, to mount altogether 150 guns, two-thirds of which may be concentrated on a passing ship in any part of the channel. The old castle of Sandown, in the Isle of Wight, built more than three hundred years ago, is fast disappearing, and the new fort on the site of Lord Yarborough's monument is progressing towards completion. The guns of this fort will prevent a landing in Sandown bay, or the neighbouring bay of Shanklin.

DUST A CAUSE OF CONSUMPTION.—Every species of dust must prove injurious. Workers in those factories where tools are ground and polished soon die of pulmonary disease. The dust of cotton and woollen factories, that of the street, and that which is constantly rising from our carpets, are all mischievous. M. Benoiston, according to Dr. Lewis, found among cotton-spinners the mortality from consumption 18 per 1,000 per annum; coal men, 41; those breathing an atmosphere charged with mineral dust, 30; dust from animal matter, as hair, wool, bristles, feathers, 54 per 1,000; of these last the greatest mortality was among workers in feathers, least among workers in wool. The average liability to consumption among persons breathing the kinds of dust named was 24 per 1,000, or 2.40 per cent. In communities where many flints were made there was greater mortality from consumption, the average length of time being only nineteen years. Bakers and millers are well known to be liable to consumption.

A FEW days ago a flannel skirt, presented by the ladies of Newtown, Montgomeryshire, to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, was forwarded by Mrs. R. P. Long, of Dolforjan, through Lord Harris, to her Royal Highness, and has since been graciously acknowledged. The skirt is made up of white Welsh flannel, manufactured specially in the town from which it is presented, by Mr. Pryce Jones, and is certainly one of the finest specimens of that fabric ever produced in Wales. The lower edge is beautifully embroidered in floss silk, emblematical of the four nationalities. In a running border are contained the rose, shamrock, and thistle, surmounted alternately by the leek and the plume of Wales. The band is of fine white satin. The skirt was presented in a handsome box, lined with Danish moire antique, and covered with crimson Genoa velvet, relieved at the corners by a Prince's plume in silver, with the same as a centre-piece. The following acknowledgment has been received: "Lord Harris has received the command of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales to express to the ladies of Newtown her best acknowledgments for their warm congratulations, and for the kind sentiments manifested towards her by their address, and the beautiful specimen of the manufacture of their town which has been submitted to her Royal Highness, and which she has been most graciously pleased to accept."



THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

NEW YORK. POSITION OF THE AMERICAN ARMIES.

THE City of New York, the commercial capital of the Northern States of America, whose recent but brief subjection to an infliction of mob law, of which it will not readily lose the remembrance, has, probably ere this, passed through another phase of the same trial, but whether the scenes of tumult and outrage that, on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July last, deluged its streets with blood, and devastated them with fire, have been repeated as threatened, in consequence of the resumption of drawing for the army, which was ordered to take place on the 3rd of the present month, we are not yet informed. As, however, it was generally known that the State and Federal authorities were determined to carry out the measure, without regard to consequences, and that they had sufficient strength upon the spot to enforce obedience to such determination, and to repress and punish any attempt to resist it, there is some ground for expectation that the law will be respected, and that the demands of the Federal Government for a further supply of "food for powder" will, in Yankee phraseology, be "satisfactorily" responded to, in which case a repetition of the scene referred to in the above engraving will have been happily avoided.

The struggle that has now for more than two years been maintained between the Northern and Southern divisions of the great American Confederacy seems likely to be as interminable as it has been sanguinary, and when it is considered that the paucity of numbers on the one side is amply compensated for by unflinching patriotism and chivalrous daring, and that on the other the deficiency of every quality that becomes a soldier, except mere physical prowess, is made up for by overwhelming numbers, by twenty millions against eight, it will not be wonderful if the war should continue until it ceases from the pure exhaustion of the combatants.

According to the latest accounts from New York, (August 1st) and, be it remembered they must be received with an immense margin for subsequent correction, the position of the chief hostile forces, was, on the 31st ult., thus represented:

"Information received at Washington yesterday from the army of the Potomac states that Lee massed his forces at Culpepper on Wednesday, and made other preparations to give us battle on the Rappahannock. His first advance, south of Culpepper, was to foil us in taking the Fredericksburg route; but finding we did not advance, he concentrated his army at Culpepper. The Rappahannock is guarded from Fredericksburg to Ely's Ford, on the Rapidan, by one rebel regiment.

The Rapidan is fortified south of Culpepper. Mosby's gang made an extensive haul of sutlers on Thursday night at Fairfax Court-house. There is no Union force stationed immediately at the Court-house. The sutlers of the army of the Potomac have been generally advised of the fact, but it is a convenient resting-place at the end of the first day's journey, and some six or seven sutlers, with their teams, wares, and chattels, bivouacked there, and were all made prisoners.

"The news from Kentucky and Tennessee continues most discouraging for the rebel cause. On Thursday, near Paris, the rebels, 375 strong, drove in our pickets, and unsuccessfully attempted to flank our troops and burn the bridge. They were driven back two miles, when the 45th Ohio came on their rear, captured fifteen, and drove the rest towards Mount Sterling. Colonel Sanders attacked their main force, above 2,000 strong, at Winchester, with eight pieces of artillery. The rebels retreated towards Irvine, Colonel Sanders pursuing them.

"We learn from Vicksburg that General Herron has gone to Mobile with his division. Our army at Vicksburg has fallen back to the Big Black River. It was reported that Joe Johnstone is retreating to Mobile. All is quiet at Port Hudson and Vicksburg. The fortifications at the former place are being strengthened, and the enlistment of negro troops is progressing rapidly. A rumour prevailed that General Wetzel had captured 3,000 rebels at Donaldsonville, that Brashear City had been retaken by us, and that General Franklin had arrived at New Orleans to take command of General Banks's army. General Grant has perfected a complete system of mounted patrols between Vicksburg and New Orleans, who, with the gunboats, afford ample protection to vessels. Everything is quiet. There are no signs of rebels on either shore.

"By the arrival of the Morning Star from New Orleans, with dates to the 25th, we learn that the Mississippi is fully open to navigation. Several steamers had arrived at New Orleans from St. Louis within a few days.

"From certain hints thrown out by one or two of the Washington journals we are inclined to suspect that it is not the purpose of the Administration to pursue the army of General Lee any further for the present, but to bring the army of General Meade to a dead halt on the Rappahannock for several weeks, if not for several months, to come." And then, like vultures impatient for the blood they scent at a distance, the New York journalist complains that, "For the last day or two we have heard as little of either of these two great armies as of the petty border war between the whites and Indians of Minnesota."

Thus, as we are informed, stands the Transatlantic quarrel at present. The struggle is one of life or death

politically to one or other of the belligerents, and we cannot err when echoing the aspiration of the Herald in the knightly Wage of Battle of the olden time, "May God defend the right."

We always think of the actor as on the stage: he always thinks of us as in the boxes.—*Dreamthorp.*

THE new mode of horsing the 40-pounder field guns with twelve horses, four abreast, was tried at Shorncliffe last week, in presence of Lord Melville, and the guns appeared to manœuvre with great ease.

THE Alexandra Park Company, it is stated, have definitively arranged with Messrs. Kelk and Lucas for the purchase of the International Exhibition Building, and its re-erection on the ground of the company, according to new designs suited to give full effect to the general objects of the undertaking.

THE world is such a buffer. A man strikes it with all his might: his mark may be £40,000, a peerage and Westminster Abbey, a name in literature or art; but in every case his mark is nicely determined by the force or the art with which the buffer is struck.—*Dreamthorp.*

THE *New York Daily News* asserts that President Davis has sent a messenger to the Emperor Napoleon, proposing an offensive and defensive alliance, the Confederate Government acknowledging the French protectorate over Mexico, and promising to modify the institution of slavery.

"FIFTEEN bishops, eight deans, fifteen archdeacons a great number of beneficed clergy, peers, and members of Parliament," have presented a memorial to the Archbishop, praying him to use his influence to shut the theatres of London during Passion Week. His Grace promised to use his influence with the Lord Chamberlain.

THE DYING WOMAN.—An interesting fact in a physiological point of view has just taken place at Kenesew, in the Palatinate of Plock. A detachment of 100 Cossacks had just invaded the village, and were preparing to pillage the chateau. At the same moment Madame Wierska, wife of an ex-colonel of the Polish army, and mother-in-law of the proprietor, M. Wosinski, was apparently about to breathe her last, and the family, with the death waxlight in their hands, surrounded her bed. At the cry of the Cossacks, who had come to lay hold of her son-in-law, the dying woman sat up, then got out of bed, and, with the most perfect presence of mind, gave such orders as were necessary under the circumstances. The danger to which her children was exposed reanimated her departing spirit. She is still alive, but has frequent hysterical attacks.

THE OLD QUEEN; OR, THE DEATH-WARRANT OF ESSEX.

CHAPTER I.

IN a small but magnificent cabinet of Hampton Court sat Elizabeth, the stern old monarch of England. Upon her forehead—darkening the furrows of age—a frown lowered ominously. Her eyes were vivid in their expression, and her thin lips clung together with the tenacity of stern and long-endured passion—the iron passion of age, in which there is so much pain.

Around her was everything beautiful and costly enough to gratify even her queenly pride and fastidious taste: hangings of rare old tapestry—cushions glowing with crimson and gold—ebony tables carved to a network and woven over with gold, supporting vases and caskets of the same precious metal, in which the royal jewels were occasionally flung—birds of Paradise, preserved in all the brilliancy of their flowing plumage—and many a rare curiosity from the East filled the royal cabinet. A Persian carpet, gorgeous with arabesque and flowers, covered a small portion of the floor, and upon this stood the great ebony chair, cushioned with purple velvet, in which the old queen was seated. The light from a large crystal window fell upon her wrinkled brow, shaded, not by the cold and wintry grey of age, but with false ringlets of sunny gold, surmounted by a small crown. Over her bowed but still majestic figure a robe of glowing crimson fell—wave after wave, till it lay a mass of mingled velvet, ermine and jewels, over the cushion on which her foot was pressed. Her withered neck, and the small pale hand that rested on the arm of her chair, were one blaze of jewels that only kindled up the ravages of time they were intended to conceal. Before her stood a small cabinet of silver, encrusted with a mosaic of precious stones, whereon lay a jewelled pen and a roll of vellum that seemed to have been freshly written upon.

Everything in the palace seemed moving on with the slow and regular magnificence that always surrounded the queen. Through an open door which led to the ante-chamber of her withdrawing-room, several pages and yeomen of the guard, in their crimson vestments and golden roses, were moving about with the listless and indifferent air of persons on easy duties. Beyond, might be seen the maids of honour, and ladies in attendance, gliding through the gorgeous apartments with that hushed and reverential manner which always bespoke their close neighbourhood to royalty. But now even more than usual signs prevailed among the high-born beauties. Many a wistful glance was cast through the open door, and the colour paled on each fair cheek, as the old queen sat with that stern frown upon her features, gazing upon the roll of parchment, that her minister, Cecil, had just brought for her signature. She reached forth her hand, took up the parchment, and slowly unrolling it, began to read. The light lay broad upon her face—and those who gazed upon it saw that a slight change fell upon her features. Some memory seemed busy with her heart—and, heaving a deep sigh, she laid the parchment down upon the cabinet, and while her hand rested on the edge, allowed it to roll together again, while she fell into a deep thought.

All at once, Elizabeth seemed to remember that she was not entirely alone. The form that had been gradually bowed, as with oppressing thought, was straightway uplifted. She turned her eagle eyes upon the door, and rising, swept across the room, and closed it with her own hand. And now her aged features were sorely troubled, alternate flashes of fierce passion, and tenderness that seemed almost as wild, shot from her eyes. Great emotion swept aside the infirmities of age for a moment, and she paced the floor of her cabinet with the quick and imperious tread that had been so conspicuous in her first queenly days.

"Why is he thus stubborn?" she muttered, clasping her hands, and then dashing them apart, as if ashamed of the feminine act. "He has the ring! he has the ring, and yet sends it not! To save his own life, will he not bend that stubborn will—and to his queen, his loving, too loving mistress?" These words seemed to overwhelm the haughty woman with recollections of the past; a tear started to her eye, and, with something of lofty pride, she added: "but if the loss of our love and favour bowed him not, what can be hoped from a fear of death? Is that stronger than—than—" Elizabeth did not finish the sentence, but sinking into her chair, pressed one hand over her eyes, and tears gushed through the jewels that burned upon it.

And Elizabeth gave free course to the tears that she might indulge in secret without detriment to her queenly pride; for that moment she was all the woman—a weak, trembling, disappointed old woman—in whose wrong heart tenderness had conquered pride. Essex, the petted favourite—the lover of her old age—it was his death-warrant that her counsellors had laid before her. The pen was ready; the dethly black ink welled to the top of her golden standard; the vellum was before her, and lacked nothing but the royal signature. She arose, and while her hands and

face were wet with tears, snatched up the scroll with a burst of passionate feeling, and trampled it under her foot.

"May thy queen perish with thee, Essex—my best, last beloved—if her hand touches this death-paper!" she cried, in a voice that reached the ante-room. "What if thy proud stomach does refuse to send the token—Elizabeth can forgive the pride her favour has fostered. The lowest man may take life, but mercy is a royal prerogative. Let them gibe, if they dare, and say that the queen could not shed the blood of him she loved. Ha! what intrusion is this?" she added, crushing the vellum beneath her foot, and dashing aside the tears that hung on her cheek. "Who dares thus force themselves on our privacy?"

As she spoke, Elizabeth drew herself up with more than regal majesty, and awaited the approach of two females dressed in deep mourning, who came tremblingly toward her; one, a tall and beautiful woman, in the full bloom and summer of life, but pale from emotion, and trembling like an aspen-leaf in every delicate limb—seemed to grow desperate as she met the eagle eyes of the queen. Clasp her hands with a sort of wild and timid grace, she sprang forward, and fell at Elizabeth's feet.

"My Lady of Essex here—here in our very presence—and you also, Lady Blunt, or Leicester, or Essex, for of your many husbands, dame, we are puzzled to know whose name besuams you. Have you not both received our command not to approach the court?"

"We did receive it, most gracious lady—most august queen," cried the older female, kneeling by her young and beautiful daughter-in-law, and speaking with that subdued and touching pathos that seems born of the troubled waters in a heart that has been long in breaking. "We did receive it, but despair has made us bold. God, in his mercy touch your heart in our behalf—for we have no hope save in this disobedience!"

The thin lips of Elizabeth Tudor curled with a cruel and haughty smile. Her rivals—the two rivals of her youth and age—were at her feet. The widow of Leicester, her first favourite—the wife of Essex, her last. Ah, how cruelly her heart exulted in the triumphs of that moment! how hard and stern it grew with thought of revenge! An oath broke from her, and she replied, with bitter violence:

"Then in this disobedience let all hope perish!" "Oh, say not so, great queen—say not so!" cried the Countess of Essex, lifting her beautiful face from the floor, where it had fallen in the bitter anguish of her first repulse. "He has been rash, headstrong, but there is not in all England a heart more loyal, nor one that loves your august person so truly."

"Ay," replied Elizabeth, with a bitter sneer, "he proved it by wedding with thy baby face!"

"Oh, that he had never seen it!" cried the beautiful woman, in a passion of bitter anguish, and burying the reviled features in her hands—for she saw that their very loveliness pleaded against her. "God help me! I know not how to plead his cause! Will nothing save him! Great queen, will nothing save him?"

Again that face was lifted from the clasped hands, and the mass of golden ringlets in which it had been for a moment buried. Oh, how piteous, how full of sorrow, were those deep blue eyes, those tender and tremulous lips!

The old queen shook off the passionate grasp which the wretched woman had fixed upon her garments, and drawing back, bent her keen and disdainful eyes on the poor suppliant, but she made no answer; and Lady Essex read her fate too truly in those stern features. Her hands dropped, and her head sank forward on her bosom, from which the last gleam of hope had gone forth.

And now the widow of Leicester—the mother of Essex—grew desperate in her anguish. As Elizabeth turned from the lovely form of her last rival to the faded beauty of Essex's mother, a shade of more gentle feeling stole over her face. In those sad and withered features there was nothing to excite envy, or outrage her own self-love. If Elizabeth was old, the suppliant at her feet had also outlived all the bloom and brightness of youth, and a bitter sorrow added its pallor to the marks that time had left.

"And you," said Elizabeth, "methought years ago the Countess of Leicester was informed that her presence would at all times be unwelcome to Elizabeth Tudor."

"I have come," said the countess, in a voice of meek humility, pathetic with sorrow, but how unlike the passionate grief of Lady Essex! "I have come, knowing that my presence must always be hateful to your Highness."

"And why hateful, pray?" cried the queen, with a haughty sneer.

"Alas, I know not, for I have ever been a humble and loving subject, a—"

The poor lady paused, for there was something in the queen's eye that warned her not to tread upon the ground of difference that existed between them. She bent her forehead till it almost touched Elizabeth's feet, and her demeanour was full of humility.

"I know, your highness, I know that with this bent form and aching heart I am no longer deemed worthy even of that displeasure which sent the most faithful and loyal subject that ever queen had to his grave, and now threatens all that is left to me—my last husband and noble son—with a darker death. Oh, that I could but die to save them! How willingly would I be stricken down here at your majesty's feet!"

There was something in this speech that seemed to move the old queen. The angry expression of her mouth relaxed a little, and turning her eyes away she seemed to meditate.

"Oh, lady, look on me! Am I not sufficiently bereaved?" cried the mother of Essex, sweeping back the raven hair from her temples, where many a silver thread was woven. "My youth was clouded by your displeasure. Must its blight press me to the grave? If so, let me perish, but save my son!"

Still the queen seemed to ponder; she evidently heard nothing that her rival was saying.

"I was his mother," continued the unhappy woman, "and loved him as only a mother can love. Yet, when he found favour with your highness—when I saw that his heart was lured by your generous condescension, till even his own mother was as nought, compared to the worship which he lavished upon his queen, I rejoiced in the sacrifice, and surrendered him willingly—but to death, oh, not to death! Great queen, say that he is not rendered up to that! It were a cruel return for so much love."

Elizabeth was now greatly disturbed. She withdrew her garments gently from the suppliant's grasp, and sat down. Once more the woman grew strong against the queen.

"Your son was a traitor," she said; "taken with arms in his hands, he has had a fair trial, and death is but justice."

"He loved you, lady, and your continued displeasure drove him mad," pleaded the mother, searching eagerly for some shadow of hope in the dim eyes of Elizabeth. "When you condemn him, I can but answer, he was guilty, but he loved you beyond all earthly things."

"Beyond all earthly things!" cried the Queen, turning her eyes upon the Countess of Essex, who still knelt upon the carpet, pale and hopeless.

The wretched young countess lifted her eyes at these words, and a mournful smile crossed her lips.

"Spare but his life," she said, "and I will never see him more. I can give him up, but not to the block, oh, God, not to the block! and, shuddering from head to foot, she sank to her old position again.

The queen glanced at her with a sort of impatient motion of the head, and then, turning to her cabinet, took up a slip of parchment and wrote upon it.

"Take this," she said, reaching it towards the elder countess; "it is an order for your admission to the Tower. Go and see your son."

The Countess of Essex almost sprang to her feet, but sank down again as she met the stern eyes of Elizabeth, who, remarking the eager joy that sparkled over her face, coldly added:

"Go and see your son, but go alone, and when you leave the Tower, come back hither, and then our answer to your prayer shall be given."

The dowager countess took the order, and cast a suppliant glance from the face of the tortured young wife, which was pale and wild with sudden emotion to that of the queen.

"The Lady Essex will remain here," she said, with cruel deliberation, and a grim smile crept over her mouth as she marked the air of keen disappointment with which the poor creature watched her mother-in-law as she rose to depart.

"Oh, for sweet mercy's sake, let me go with her," cried the agonized wife, as her companion in misery moved toward the door. "Mother, mother, plead for me."

"Go," said the queen, sternly, waving her hand. "The Countess of Essex will await you here."

Still upon her knees, the unhappy wife of Essex watched her mother-in-law as she opened the door and disappeared. Her lips were parted, and her eyes grew wild and eager, like those of a newly-prisoned bird, when he seeks to dart through the wires of his cage. The queen watched her narrowly, and that cold smile deepened around her lips. She found inhuman satisfaction in the torture which she was inflicting on the young and suffering wife whom Essex had dared to marry against her own imperious will. The humble position which the suppliant dared not change, unbidden, even if weakness had not chained her to the floor—the look of keen disappointment that settled on her eloquent face, were all sources of cruel pleasure to the iron-hearted Elizabeth. Her revenge on the youth and beauty that had won the love of Essex from herself seemed almost perfect. Notwithstanding his contumacy and his pride, she could have pardoned him then, but for the thought that her clemency must reunite him to that beautiful young wife.

For some considerable time, Elizabeth sat fostering her revengeful jealousy in silence. Lady Essex had almost fallen upon the floor, and towered, rather than

kneelt, at her enemy's feet. She seemed withered to the heart by the cruel scorn with which her petition for mercy had been received.

At last the queen arose and entered her bed-chamber, into which the cabinet opened. With her all struggle was ended. She had resolved how to act, and left the room with a slow but imperious tread, leaving the poor wife faint and heart-sick with suspense.

Half an hour after, the queen was in her audience-chamber, receiving some foreign ambassadors with more than her usual elaborate courtesy, but the reception soon became wearisome, and her heart grew heavy beneath its weight of jewels. She had offered Essex a last chance for life. Would his pride yield? Would he take advantage of his mother's visit to forward the ring that she had given him years before as a pledge that, in any extremity, she would be merciful to him? She began to fear that he might still hold out—that his haughty pride would bend only beneath the keen edge of the axe. Then another doubt entered her heart, and fired it with passions again. What if Essex no longer possessed the ring? What if he had parted with her gift as a love-token to some other woman? This doubt became insupportable, and, as she stood there in all the pomp of her regal state, it fastened on her like a bird of prey; she could not shake it off; and when Elizabeth returned to her closet hours after, she was almost as much an object of compassion as the wretched woman whom she had forgotten there.

The Countess of Essex had been alone in that gorgeous little room all the time that Elizabeth was occupied with her court. The torturing suspense of each miserable hour as it crept by, no pen can describe. She had neither strength nor courage to go away, and, seating herself upon one of the crimson chairs, remained motionless and heart-sick, waiting for her destiny.

It came at last, for the old queen entered her cabinet, having dismissed her ladies-in-waiting at the door. She, too, was suffering the stern torture of suspense, and had come there for rest and solitude. The unhappy countess arose as she saw the queen. Her clasped hands dropped meekly downwards, and her lips grew pallid as she was preparing herself for some cruel taunt, some bitter sneer from the royal lips.

But if Elizabeth could have found it in her heart to increase the affliction that oppressed the poor suppliant, she had no time for such cruelty. Scarcely had she reached her chair, when an aged gentlewoman of the bed-chamber opened the door and announced: "The Lady Blunt, Countess Dowager of Leicester." This lady seemed completely exhausted with the terrible sorrows of that weary day. She approached the queen, tottering in her walk, and knelt at her feet.

"Well," said Elizabeth, sharply, for she was anxious almost as the suppliant at her feet, "our order admitted you, doubtless; and your son—felt he a proper sense of our clemency in granting the visit?"

"He was grateful, and upon his bended knees besought many a blessing upon the mistress who could thus send comfort to an offending servant. He—"

"But the ring—the ring. Why talk of lesser things, woman? If Essex is in truth penitent, he has sent the ring given with our own hand, under a solemn pledge of mercy, even though his crime were deserving death. If he has sent the ring, render it up at once. It should plead his cause against our whole council, nay, against all England."

"Alas, alas!" said the countess, "he gave me no ring."

"Nor mentioned one?" said the queen, still in a sharp, anxious voice.

"Nor mentioned one," was the faint and heart-broken reply.

"Then God have mercy upon him, for I will have none."

Elizabeth stooped as she spoke, and took up the roll of parchment, which still lay where she had trampled it on the carpet. She laid it upon the silver cabinet, slowly smoothing it out with both hands. Very pale those hands were, and so also was her face, but every feature seemed locked with fierce resolution; she was calm and stern as death.

When the parchment was smoothed, Elizabeth took a pen from the standish before her, and, without a tremor or the pause of moment, wrote her signature. A cry of terrible anguish broke from the two women as they saw her take up the pen, and they cast themselves at her feet, clinging wildly to her robe.

Elizabeth took no heed, but appended the usual bold flourishes to her signature, and touched a little bell that stood upon the cabinet.

"Take this to the Lord Chancellor, and see that the great seal is affixed," she said to the person who entered; "then conduct these ladies from the palace, and see that they enter it no more."

"That parchment," cried the Countess of Essex, following the man, as he went forth, with her wild eyes—"great queen, in mercy say it is not—it is not—"

The wretched wife could not finish the question that she had begun; her lips seemed turned to ice, and her breath choked her.

"It is the Earl of Essex's death-warrant," said Elizabeth, rising sternly up. "Go!"

She lifted her withered finger, and pointed toward the door.

The young wife knelt motionless, frozen, as it were, with the horrid truth that had been told her. But the mother of Essex stood up; her lips were ashen, her eyes had a terrible light in them.

"Elizabeth of England, the great God of Heaven will call you to judgment for this act!"

Before the queen had rallied from the awe with which these words had filled even her undaunted spirit, Lady Blunt had raised her daughter-in-law from the floor.

"My daughter, let us go. Henceforth we must only trust to the God who will avenge us."

A moment after, and the old queen was alone.

CHAPTER II.

It was done; the axe had fallen. The queen's dignity was saved, and her heart broken. She was at her harpsichord when they brought her tidings of Essex's execution. Her face was turned from the light, and no one saw the spasm of pain that convulsed its stern lineaments. She did not pause even for an instant, but her hand was dashed violently on the instrument, sending forth a harsh, sharp note, that was almost a wail, and then the soft music gushed forth again sweetly, as if nothing had happened. Alas, how slight are sometimes the indications which a proud heart allows the world to see of those struggles that pass through the soul like an earthquake! That moment had left the haughty woman and the most imperious queen that trod the soil of England, utterly desolate.

"What ho! what ho! Who claims admittance to the palace at this late hour?" cried the yeoman of the guard, as he arose an hour after midnight, to answer an abrupt summons at the great portal which opened to the Thames. A few words from without, of explanation and entreaty, soon prevailed upon the guard to admit the untimely visitor, who paused by the entrance, and, taking the yeoman on one side, spoke to him earnestly for some moments.

"What! the old Countess of Nottingham dying, and would have speech of her grace?" exclaimed the royal doorkeeper. "Why, think you the queen would arise from her couch at this hour of the night, and risk her sacred person on the water at the behest of fifty dying countesses?"

"I tell you," rejoined the man, whose face was pale with excitement, "I tell you, this message of my dying mistress must be brought to her Majesty; there is that in it which the boldest man in England dare not keep from Elizabeth an instant. As you value liberty and life, friend, do nothing to hinder me in deliverance of my mission. The soul of my poor mistress will wrestle sorely with the body till I bring back tidings to her death-bed. I must see the queen!"

"Be it so, then, as your business is so momentous," cried the yeoman; "I will lead you to the ante-room, and arouse some of the ladies—but remember, if evil comes of this, I will not hold myself responsible. The man should be bold, and the business weighty, that disturbs Elizabeth from her slumber at this hour."

"The business is weighty, and the scene that I have witnessed this night is enough to make a man brave any earthly peril without shrinking. What is it to ask an audience here, when my poor mistress is summoned before the King of Kings?"

"Have you a letter, or bring you only a message by word of mouth?" said the yeoman, still hesitating though the agitation of his untimely visitor had made a strong impression upon him.

"Here is the letter!" cried the man, taking a large, square missive from his bosom, sealed with the Nottingham arms in black. "Hasten, good friend—hasten, I beseech you, and give it to the queen. Heaven only knows what torment my wretched mistress will know till the errand is done."

The guard seemed greatly relieved by this tangible and imposing excuse for disturbing the slumbers of his mistress. He took the letter, and passing through many a state-chamber and richly decorated gallery, paused in an ante-room, where half a dozen pages lay upon their couches asleep, some disrobed, and others muffled in mantles of azure velvet, and pillowed upon their own perfumed ringlets.

"What ho!" cried the guard, shaking one of these pages by the arm, and half-lifting him from the couch.

"Arouse yourself, good Master George, and rub open those blue eyes, without loss of time. Here is a letter, which you must give to one of the queen's bed-chamber women this very instant. Say that it is a case of life and death. Do you hear, Jackanapes?"

"Do I hear?" cried the lad, rubbing his eyes with a little hand, white as a lady's and sparkling with rings, "I should be deaf if it were otherwise. Why, man, your voice is like a trumpet. Do you guess what hour of the night it is? coming after this fashion to the very

door of her Majesty's chamber. This will make you a head shorter some fine day, master yeoman!"

"Take the letter, and leave me to the care of my own head," replied the yeoman, sharply. "Give it to the first lady of the bed-chamber, and say that a messenger from the Countess of Nottingham awaits her majesty's pleasure here."

The lad took the letter, held it to the light of a large silver lamp that swung overhead, examined the seal minutely, and then turned his eyes with equal assurance upon the messenger, whose anxiety became each moment more apparent.

"It must be a pressing business, and if one may judge by the white face of our friend there, full of peril. No matter, it shall not be said that the beloved of—the fairest and sweetest lady about the court—mind, master yeoman, I mention no name—ever allowed the peril of an enterprise to count anything with him. Rest content, good friend," he added, turning to the messenger, "I will find a lady who, for my sake, would take upon herself greater danger than that of arousing the queen at midnight; fortunately, you have chanced upon the only courtier who could have managed the matter for you."

"Well, Jackanapes, get about the errand after your own fashion," cried the yeoman, with an impatient laugh.

"Nay, you would not have me present myself before her without some preparation," said the youth, shaking the scented and glossy ringlets, with which his head was adorned, over his shoulders, and arranging the folds of his cloak with an air of the most perfect self-conceit. "Tell me, master yeoman—for, lacking a mirror, I must even take counsel of your ignorance—think you not this garment falls a trifle too much over the right shoulder? Let me step beneath the lamp, that you may judge."

"Tush, boy! this is no time for such foppery. Begone upon thy errand, or I will find it in my heart to knock a portion of the conceit from that little body. Go—go! See you not our friend here is fast losing patience?"

This allusion to the messenger from Nottingham House was well authorized by the appearance of the man. Once or twice, as if bereft of all patience by the boy's foppish airs, he advanced a pace to take the letter from his hand, half-determined to enter the queen's chamber, and at all peril present it himself. His cheek grew more and more pale, and his eyes burned with anxiety that nothing could restrain, as the page turned his head superciliously over one shoulder to look at him, after the yeoman's remark, still holding the letter carelessly between his thumb and finger. His impatience broke all bounds. He strode forward, and grasping the youth by the arm, gave him a slight shake.

"You trifle with a message from the dying," he said, sternly. "No more of this folly! Begone!"

The boy shook himself free, and with a petulant lift of the shoulder, muttered something about his cloak being forced awry; but there was something in the deep passion with which he had been addressed, that completely quelled his frivolous spirit, and without attempting any further excuse for delay, he left the chamber.

The queen had been ill in health, and becoming daily more infirm, it was necessary that some one of her ladies should remain in attendance at night, ready at a moment's warning to answer her summons. Thus it was that the page, on entering the small ante-room, or rather boudoir, which led to the royal bed-chamber, found a lovely woman in full dress, but with a rich brocade dressing-gown thrown over her shoulders, sound asleep in a large easy chair heaped with crimson cushions, upon which her fair head had fallen, crushing a mass of beautiful hair that had cost an artist much labour that morning, beneath the warm roses of her cheek.

"Lady Arabella," whispered the page, stealing toward the fair slumberer, and sinking upon his knees while he touched the little hand that fell over an arm of the chair timidly with his—"Lady Arabella."

His voice was very low—for the boy could hardly breathe, his agitation was so great. With all his audacious vanity, he was timid as a child in the presence of purity and high-born loveliness like that. "Lady Arabella, I have a letter—I would speak with you."

The lady started up in her chair, passed a hand over her eyes, as if to be quite sure that they were not deceiving her, and then bent them, full of sleepy wonder, upon the youth.

"Why, George, how is this? Here, and after midnight!" she said, gently, but with evident surprise and some displeasure.

"Lady, I have brought this for her Majesty," said the boy, holding up the letter with its broad black seal; "a messenger has just arrived from Nottingham House. He says the countess is dying."

"Dying!" exclaimed the Lady Arabella.

"Aye, dying; and the messenger says the lady, in her extremity, will have speech with the queen—that this letter must be given to her Majesty even now!"

"It cannot be," said the Lady Arabella, putting back the letter with her hand; "our royal mistress is ill at ease; since—since his death she gets but little sleep. I dare not disturb her!"

"Shall I take the letter back?" said the page, rising. "The man is waiting without."

"Yet if the poor countess is in such a strait—if she is in truth dying!" said the gentle lady, reluctant to refuse that which she, nevertheless, had not the courage to undertake.

"Who speaks of dying?—what is it? Who speaks of dying?" cried a sharp voice from the royal bed-chamber. "Arabella—Arabella!"

"Hush! it is the queen. Give me the letter!" whispered the lady, and she entered an adjoining chamber.

Elizabeth had half-risen, and leaned upon her elbow in the midst of her huge bed—her face looked haggard in the crimson shadows cast downward from the cumbersome hangings, and her head shook with an almost imperceptible tremor, that portended both of the infirmities of age, and of the terror that sometimes follows unpleasant dreams. Locks of grey hair streamed down from her night cap, and she clutched the damask counterpane with a hand that shook like an aspen as it crushed the glowing folds together.

"Did I dream?—I did dream of the dead!" she exclaimed, bending her keen eyes upon the lady as she entered, and sinking slowly back to her pillow. "Of the dead—the dying! The Countess of Nottingham—who told me the Countess of Nottingham was dying?"

"Your Highness must have been disturbed by the messenger that just came up from Nottingham House with this letter," said the Lady Arabella, kneeling by the royal couch. "The hour was so untimely, that I was about to send him back again."

"Give me the letter," cried Elizabeth, starting up, and seizing the folded parchment fiercely, as a bird of prey clutches its spoil; "I tell you, Arabella, I have dreamed things to-night that make the sundering of this seal terrible!" and with shaking hands the queen burst the black seal and tore it apart.

She cast her keen eyes over its contents, and dashing the letter aside, sprang to the floor. "Yon garments, Arabella; bring you garments and robe me," she cried, in a voice that was low, but fearfully concentrated. "Quick, quick! No ruff—no farthingale, but a cloak and hood—one for yourself, too. Who waits in the ante-chamber?"

"The page, young George Pagot, one of your highness's yeomen, and the messenger from Nottingham House."

"It is enough! Let the boy go with us—the boy and yourself—that will be sufficient escort for Elizabeth on an errand like this."

"Shall I tell George to give orders that the royal barge be prepared?"

"No—send him the messenger."

"Hither?" questioned Arabella, mindful of the disarray which the royal person still exhibited.

"Yes—here, and thus!" replied Elizabeth, and a bitter smile swept over her face as she interpreted the look of her attendant.

Filled with wonder that almost amounted to consternation, Arabella went forth to summon the messenger. Elizabeth received him at the door of her chamber. She had folded a cloak around her person, but the hood was thrown back, and with nothing but her grey hair veiling the aged brow that had never been presented to the gaze of mortal man before, without the disguise of art and a blaze of jewels, she put a few brief questions to him:

"Come you to the place by water?"

"By water, may it please your highness," replied the man.

"And your barge is here?"

"It is now in waiting, and the tide serves."

"Lead on!" said the queen. "Arabella, follow us with the boy; and you," she added, turning to the guard, "go attend us to the water, and then stir not from the gate till our return;" and the queen walked on with a degree of strength and energy which startled those who had witnessed the feebleness that had marked the few last months of her life.

As they went forth into the open air, Arabella moved close to her royal mistress. "Let me draw the hood somewhat over your Majesty's head," she pleaded, for the wind was trifling with those snowy tresses, and it pained the young girl to see how careless the proud old queen seemed of an exposure to which she had always been so sensitive.

"Nay, the cool wind does me good," replied Elizabeth, and with a firm step she descended to the barge, and took a seat upon one of the cushions.

Midnight darkness lay upon the river; clouds, heavy and black, were heaped over the sky; and the shores, save here and there a solitary light from some residence, lay in profound night. Amid this wilderness of gloom, the barge swept rapidly downward with the tide. The flow of the waters, heavy and monotonous, was all the sound to be heard; no word was spoken, save when the old queen bade the rowers make more speed.

At last the barge drew up by a flight of steps that led to a spacious garden half-surrounded by the wings of a fine old mansion-house. Through one of the tall windows a light streamed forth upon the blackness, faint and dim, as if some lamp placed there were just expiring.

"Go on to the sick room," said the queen, as her conductor would have taken her to another apartment, that her presence might be announced. "Stay you below, Arabella; we will see this dying countess alone;" and, with a firm step, Elizabeth mounted the stairs, and found herself in the chamber of death.

A huge bed, canopied with masses of purple velvet, so deep tinted that it seemed black in the gloom, stood at an extremity of the chamber; and upon it lay the pale form of a woman struggling in her death-agony. A group of persons stood around the bed, silent and awe-stricken. Toward this group Elizabeth moved slowly, upright, and majestic.

"It is the queen!" cried the dying countess, lifting her thin hand. "God has had mercy. It is the queen—and I can now die!"

"Leave us," said Elizabeth, waving her hand. The next moment she stood alone with the dying.

"Countess of Nottingham, you have sent for the queen—and she is here. What have you to say of Essex? In what can your death-bed confessions concern one whose fate is now sealed?"

The Countess of Nottingham clasped her pale hands, and held them imploringly toward the queen. Those hands were almost transparent, and, as the light fell upon them, upon one of the fingers it revealed a ruby, glowing like a spark of fire upon it. Elizabeth's eyes fell upon the gem, and instantly she became pale as the woman who lay prostrate before her, pleading with mute eloquence for mercy.

"Woman," she said, grasping the pale hand of the dying countess, and bending her eyes close to the ruby, whose light made the heart tremble in her bosom, "Woman! how came you possessed of this ring?"

The Countess of Nottingham closed her eyes, to shut out the terrible anger that convulsed the aged face bending over her death-pillow; her lips moved again and again, before they could utter a word. At length she spoke, but feebly and very low. The queen bent her head close to those pale lips, that her thirsty ear might drink in every syllable of the confession they were whispering. She held her breath—and a wild, fierce expression, like that of a wounded eagle, came to her eyes. When all was told—when the dying woman opened her eyes, and, with a look of most touching entreaty, besought mercy for the fraud which had brought the noble head of Essex to the block—then the volcano which her words had lighted in the old queen's heart, blazed forth. Elizabeth stood upright: the infirmities of age were swallowed up in her mighty wrath: her lips grew livid—her eyes burned as with fire—and every nerve in her body seemed hardening into iron.

"Mercy?" she cried, in a voice shrill with anguish and wrath; "Woman! God may forgive you, but I never will!"

The wretched countess, terrified even in her death-throes, cowered down and grovelled in her bed. "Oh, God! wilt thou too withhold mercy?" broke from her shivering lips.

"Mercy?" whispered the old queen—for wrath made her voice very low, and she spoke between her locked teeth—"Mercy?" and, mad with anguish, she seized the dying woman, and shook her, till the huge couch, with its gloomy masses of velvet and its dusky plumes, trembled in every joint.

When the old monarch withdrew her hands from this unquenchably act, they dropped helplessly by her side, for she saw that her violence had done sacrifice to the dead.

Ten minutes went by, during which Elizabeth stood over that death-couch; then she turned away, and passing from the chamber, descended the stairs, waving a hand for her young attendants to follow. When Elizabeth entered the dwelling, she wore no jewel of any kind, but, as the light fell upon hand in going forth, Arabella saw that a ruby blazed upon one of the fingers.

It was night when the Queen of England entered her own palace again—night upon the earth, night in her own heart. She could scarcely walk while passing through the palace-grounds, and leaned heavily upon the arm of Lady Arabella all the way to her own chamber. Within the solitude of her room she sat till morning—her face pale and rigid, her limbs bowed as with a heavy weight—gazing intently upon the ring, which burned like a blood-spot on her finger—a blood-spot—and so it was. That ring she had given to Essex, when highest in her favour, with a promise that, let his fault be what it might, forgiveness should follow its presentation to her. He had sent the ring, a few days before his execution, by the wretched Countess of Nottingham, who withheld it in fraud—and, by this treachery, Elizabeth became the executioner of one whom she loved better than life.

And now that he was dead, the ring had reached her from the hand of death. Was it strange that the old

queen never smiled again—that henceforth she called for a staff to support her as she walked about the palace—or that, in a few weeks, she lay upon the cushions heaped in her chamber, weary, heart-sick—afraid to die, and yet dying? A. S.

POSTING A LETTER.

THROUGH the introduction of a mutual friend, I became acquainted with a gentleman whom it suits my purpose to call Henry St. Clair. He was a man of means and elegant leisure, was fond of literature and the fine arts, and had his country seat upon the banks of one of our most beautiful and romantic rivers. While strolling through his delightful grounds, and admiring a hundred pleasant objects, he said to me:

"And who would suppose the foundation of all this was laid in the simple act of posting a letter?"

I looked at him inquiringly.

"Did it never occur to you," he went on, "that if at the beginning a stone had dropped into the fountain or source of a mighty river, the stream might have been so changed as to have flowed through other valleys, and been the pride and glory of another region? So it is with the fortunes of man. A trifle sometimes changes everything, and shapes a career for good or evil. Much of the happiness or misery of life we owe to some little event of no greater moment than the dropping of a stone into the fountain. My own is a case in point. Sit down here, in this little arbour, and I will tell you the brief story."

"My father," pursued Henry St. Clair, "died poor, and left my mother, with three small children, to struggle along in a troublesome world. I was the eldest, and I was nine. My mother laboured hard, and not unfrequently stinted herself, to give me a passable education; and as soon as I was old enough to comprehend how much she sacrificed for me, I resolved to assist her in whatever way I could. At thirteen I got a situation as office-boy, which paid me a small stipend, and I improved all my leisure time in study. I was naturally a good penman, and by adding a knowledge of book-keeping, and sharply watching for all the chances, I obtained, during the course of a couple of years, the place of an assistant accountant in a large mercantile house."

"My son," said my delighted mother, when I had hurried home and told her the news, "you seem now to have reached the high road to prosperity, and I hope and pray you may never leave it. Be diligent, be truthful, be honest, and remember that whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; always study to please, not only your employers, but all with whom you may come in contact; and when you can do any one a favour without trespassing upon your duties, never fail to do it; thus will you faithfully serve those who hire you, and raise yourself up many friends."

"I thought her counsel good, and I made it my rule of action. For two years everything went well, and then my employers failed, and I was thrown out of business. But I did not long remain idle. Through the influence of a gentleman, whose friendship I had secured by following the advice of my mother, I next obtained a clerkship in the post-office. There I remained for seven years—until, in fact, I left it to go into business for myself. The cause of my leaving it is the little story I set out to relate."

"I had been in the post-office about three years, when one day, as I was standing at one of the general-delivery windows, a stout, rustic-looking man—red, heated, and excited—came rushing up, letter in hand, and, catching his breath between the words, exclaimed:

"Will you be kind enough to tell me what time the mail closes that is to go out in the packet Albion?"

"It is closed already," said I, glancing at the time; "you are too late by half-an-hour."

"The man turned deadly pale, and looked as if he was about to faint."

"Gracious Heaven!" he ejaculated, leaning against the wall for support; "I have ridden fifty miles since sunset last night, to post this letter, and I am too late at last!"

"Is it of great importance?" I inquired in a sympathetic tone.

"Yes! yes!" he gasped, glancing at me imploringly, and seeming to catch a ray of hope. "Oh, could you—"

"Quick!" I interrupted; "give me the letter, the mail has not yet gone; perhaps there may be time."

"I almost snatched it from his trembling hand, and darted away with it. I had some trouble in getting it into the proper letter-bag, but as a personal favour to me it was done, though another minute would have been too late. The man was waiting for me when I returned, and I shall never forget his eager, inquiring look, so full of hope and fear."

"Your letter is mailed," I said; "it will go, if not already gone."

"Thank you! God bless you!" he exclaimed, with

considerable emotion, tears filling his eyes. 'Your name, sir, if you please?' he added, reaching his hand and grasping mine with a fervour there was no mistaking.

'Never mind the name,' I returned, with a light laugh; 'it was only a trifling act, and if it has served you in any way, you are welcome to it.'

'Please give me your name,' he rejoined. 'I would like to know it.'

'I wrote it down on a card and handed it to him.'

'He read it, took out his pocket-book, and put it away carefully; and then, as he again shook my hand at parting, said:

'I shall not forget you, Mr. St. Clair. Not one in a thousand would have put himself to so much trouble for a stranger, without any hope of reward. This is a selfish world, sir—a very selfish world—as I have found to my cost. Good-bye, sir! I will not take up your time any longer. You have done me a greater favour than you dream of, and I never forget a favour. It may some day be in my power to serve you, and then I shall remember you. Once more, good-bye, sir, and God bless you!'

'He walked rapidly away, and I never saw him again. I only thought over the matter, to wonder what that letter contained, to make its going out in the next American packet—there were no steamships running regularly then as now—of such vital importance, and then it gradually passed out of my mind, and took its place among the thousand trifling incidents that are forgotten.'

'The salary of my post-office clerkship gave me a comfortable living, and when my next youngest brother had secured a place, we managed to put our mother at ease in mind and body. I had been over six years engaged in postal affairs, when one day, to my great surprise, I received a letter which contained these words:

'If you will send your address, and a card, with your name written on it as you were accustomed to write it three or four years ago, you will hear of something to your advantage.'

'This was signed by a name I had never heard of before, with a full superscription for the return letter. Filled with surprise, and all kinds of speculations and conjectures concerning wealthy deceased relatives far removed, of whom I had never had any knowledge, I lost no time in complying with the mysterious request in every particular, and the next packet carried my missive in safety across the great waters. When sufficient time had elapsed for a reply to reach me, I became very anxious, and I looked for the arrival of every American packet with an eagerness little short of an uninsured merchant expecting a valuable cargo.'

'Weeks and months passed away, and no news arrived. Then I came to the conclusion that my handwriting had not proved me to be the person required, and that I should never hear any more of the matter, more especially as my mother assured me she had never heard of our having any relatives in America—though such a thing might be.'

'Meantime, a friend of mine, a very ingenious person, who had recently patented an invention of great prospective value, came to me and asked me if I had any money to invest in a profitable speculation.'

'Unfortunately,' said I, 'I have not—it takes all my salary to live in a respectable manner.'

'I am sorry,' he rejoined, 'for I would rather have you for a partner than any other I know of. There is a fortune in my invention—I know it—but it will take some capital, from three to five thousand pounds, to get it properly before the public; and as I have not the means myself, I must unite with some one who has.'

'He then laid before me his plans, and so well satisfied me of the success of his scheme, that I was quite depressed at the fact that I could not join him. Although I really had no prospect of raising the money, I begged him to wait a few days, and let me make the trial, which he willingly consented to do. I called upon three different parties, and stated the case, but received only the ordinary regrets that they could not just then accommodate me. One had had the amount, he said, lying idle only the week before, but had already invested it in real estate. Another had just agreed to put that amount into the business of a friend, and of course could not break his promise. The third had nothing at his command, and of course expressed more regret than the others. I say of course, because such is the world. Men are generally sorry and sympathetic in the adverse ratio of their power to assist.'

'In the meantime my friend had found a man ready to advance the capital and become his partner, in case I should fail to do so; and believing my efforts to be hopeless, after the third refusal, I went around to his office, with a sad heart, to tell him not to wait any longer for me. He was not in, and I did not see him that day; and before another day dawned, I received my long looked-for letter.'

'I opened it with an eager, trembling hand, hoping it might contain some good news, on which to build a future hope. Judge of my surprise and delight, on finding an enclosed draft for five thousand pounds,

payable to my order. Could it be real and genuine? were not my senses deceiving me? To come, too, just at the moment when, as I believed, two thousand pounds would assure me a fortune, made it seem more like magic than reality.'

'With an almost swimming brain, I read the letter accompanying it. The writer began by calling me his dear friend, but warned me I should find the name of a stranger attached to the epistle.'

'You may remember, however,' the writer went on, 'that somewhere about four years ago, a person came to the post-office where you were then a clerk, and inquired of you what time the mail closed that was to go out in the next packet; that you told him he was already half-an-hour too late; that you pitied his distress at this announcement, and offered to get his letter posted if possible. You succeeded, and received his grateful thanks, and at his urgent request, wrote your name for him on a card. I hope you remember all this, because the writer is that individual, and desires to live in your memory, as you ever will in his.'

'Now, kind friend,' the epistle proceeded, 'let me tell you of the importance of that letter and its value to me. I had a rich, unmarried uncle, who was in a deep decline. He had been told I was dead, and had willed his vast possessions to other relatives. I heard of this, as it were by accident, and that he was about to sail to the East Indies, never to return. A letter by the next packet might possibly reach him. I wrote it, and rode fifty miles to post it; and it would have been too late only for your kindness. It did reach him, however, on the eve of his departure, and caused an important alteration in the will, for I was the only son of a favourite sister. He sailed for India, and died on the passage; and if my letter had missed that packet, he would never have received it. The difference to me would have been a fortune. I was poor then—I am rich now. Will you accept this trifle—not as a reward, but as a token of friendship—from one who has ever been, and ever will be, grateful? That single minute of time, which you so kindly improved, made the difference of a world to me; and if it is ever in my power to change your fortune for the better, I am yours to command. I would have sent this remembrance sooner, but there has been some litigation, and I have only recently come into possession of my legacy. You will, of course, pardon my having sent for your address and card, to avoid the possibility of a mistake; and my absence in India, on the return of your letter, must be my apology for my long delay in communicating with you since.'

'This was the substance of a letter that made the difference of a world to me—for I now had the means of entering into partnership with my friend—and that resulted, as you see, in a fortune and as much happiness as can be found in this sphere of existence. It would be difficult to calculate the changes effected and the persons made happy by that simple act of posting a letter; and if we go down to posterity, and consider the destinies altered by that one trifling thing, we shall perceive how great, under Providence, becomes the smallest deed of our lives. It may be the stone in the fountain.'

E. B.

A HARDY SEAMAN.

THE small seaport of Brixham, situated on the western side of Torbay, and celebrated in history as the spot where William of Orange landed in 1688, is chiefly remarkable at the present day for its fisheries, and is the abode of a large seafaring population. One of that amphibious race is Clement Pine, the hero of this story. The Brixham fishers often go far in pursuit of their trade; and Pine, a few weeks back, found himself at Sunderland. He had had very bad fortune, and his ill-luck was completed by the loss of his fishing-gear. Being thus reduced to poverty, he was obliged to sell the trawling-sloop in which he had come from his Devonshire home. He was six hundred miles by sea passage from his own part of the coast, and had no friends in Sunderland to help him back. Accordingly, with the money he was enabled to raise by the sale of the sloop, and of everything else he possessed, he purchased a small boat, of which the extreme length is nineteen feet, and which is so simply and slightly constructed that it has neither deck nor cuddy. This little shallow he provisioned with a quarter of a stone of biscuit, two pounds of bacon, one ounce of coffee, and a gallon and a half of fresh water. A box of matches and a compass completed his equipment. Thus poorly furnished, he committed himself to the perilous ocean, as Robinson Crusoe might have done had he determined to try and work his way back from the desert island to Hull in an open canoe.

Starting from North Sunderland on Thursday, July 9th, at noon, Pine reached Hartlepool about the same time on the following day. The voyage up to that point had not been very preposterous; and for a moment the venturesome mariner thought of turning back. But this mood soon passed, and he again set sail. New misfortunes, however, awaited him. The spirit of his little craft was carried away in Boston Deep by a strong south-easter, and in this disabled state he struggled on

to Dover, which he reached by the middle of Monday, the 13th. Here he gave himself a little rest, passing the night on shore, and while staying in the town fell in with some trawlers, who strongly urged him not to persist in the attempt, or, at least, to suffer himself to be taken in tow by one of their vessels. His pride, however, was probably by this time enlisted on the side of his feat, and he determined to go on alone. On the following morning he was up betimes, and once more solitarily afloat, watching the heavens and the waves, and steering his course for Newhaven, in Sussex. This place he reached the same day, and, after stopping there a short time, pushed on again on his westward course. At Ryde, Isle of Wight, he made rather a long stay, viz., from the mid-day of Friday, the 17th, to the middle of Sunday, the 19th. On Monday, the 20th, he arrived at Portland, and was becalmed the whole night. At Teignmouth, which was made on Tuesday, the 21st, the brave little sailing-boat got on a bar of sand, and stuck there until flood-tide. This, however, was the last of Pine's misadventures. On the evening of Wednesday, the 22nd, the welcome harbour of Brixham came in sight, and the courageous sailor was soon among his old companions, who at first could hardly believe the story of his voyage

SCIENCE.

CARBONIC ACID IN THE ATMOSPHERE.—At the last sitting of the French Academy of Sciences, M. Mine read a paper on the quantity of carbonic acid in the air, showing that it does not exist in the same amount throughout the year. During December and January the quantity remains nearly the same; it increases in February, March, April, and May, and diminishes during the months of June, July, and August; after which it increases again from September to November, the maximum of the whole year occurring in October. During the night it is more abundant than in the daytime. The maximum quantity during the day occurs at noon. After a shower it always experiences an increase.

PARADOXES IN THE VENTILATION OF MINES.

At a recent meeting of the Northern Institute of Mining Engineers, a paper on the above subject, by Messrs. Atkinson and Daglish, was read, of which the following is an abstract:—

When alterations are to be made in the ventilating currents of mines, practical knowledge is generally relied on to effect these; but it sometimes happens that the anticipated results are not realized, some of the currents proving stronger and others weaker than was expected, and others even failing entirely to establish themselves. In other instances, after accidents have occurred, or when extensive alterations are in progress in the workings or ventilating shafts, whereby some of the ordinary arrangements for ventilation have been materially affected, particular parts of mines have had their ventilation deranged in a manner and to an extent entirely unanticipated. All these cases may, with some degree of propriety, be termed "paradoxes." The paper then proceeds to describe and explain a number of very remarkable instances where this action has been observable; these all requiring diagrams to be illustrated. The following practical deductions from the cases instanced are thus made at considerable length:—

1. The danger that may attend the use of two open routes from a return air-way, to any part of an up-cast shaft, at a considerable height above the level of the furnace, when the air in one of the routes, in ascending portions, is raised to a much higher temperature than that in the other.

2. The danger that may arise from the injudicious use and application of dumb drifts.

3. The probability of a reversal of the current in the upper seams of any colliery, when the up-cast shaft is contracted above by a cradle or scaffolding during the progress of repairs.

4. The danger attending intercommon ventilation between two adjoining collieries, having separate down-cast and up-cast shafts, arising from the extreme probability of variation, not only in quantity, but even in direction, of some of the splits of air—in cases of the ventilating powers of either of the collieries being considerably increased or diminished.

5. The necessity of insuring that a distinct pressure exists on all stoppings in a direction from where naked lights are used; and that in all cases a return from an in-take split should intervene between it and any separation stoppings of another split.

6. The danger attending the use of regulating doors instead of permanent regulators, placed so as to have as little passage as possible through them.

The necessity of using safety-lamps only in cases of falls in the air-ways, or other causes tending greatly to diminish the gross quantity of air circulating, especially in mines having extensive workings, as in either case, reverse currents from the directions of the goaves would probably be established.

In conclusion, the title of "paradoxes" has not been employed to convey the idea that the ordinary laws of nature were either suspended, or in any way departed from, in producing the results given in these cases; but simply to imply they were such as were not likely to be anticipated before they were observed, even by those experienced in the ventilation of mines. Cases like those described clearly demonstrate that the thorough and safe ventilation of a mine yielding fire-damp, requires for its accomplishment a great deal more than the mere obtaining and circulation of a large gross quantity of air. Indeed, after providing the power and means necessary, great judgment, skill, and care should be exercised by the underground manager in making the arrangements for its proper and safe distribution. And, in addition to this, there is further required great and constant vigilance on the part of the subordinate agents; together with implicit obedience to discipline, and prudence on the part of each one of the work-people in the mine, in order to ensure even a moderate degree of safety, and of immunity from explosion of fire-damp. And with all these combined, explosions cannot be entirely prevented, for human prescience and forethought have their limit equally with human knowledge and skill, and all that we can hope for is the diminution of their frequency or the mitigation of their severity.

FACETIÆ.

"MAN," says Adam Smith, "is an animal that makes bargains. No other animal does this—no dog exchanges bones with another."

A CORRESPONDENT asks us what is a milkwort? Milk is wort twopence a pint, though, when it is made of calves' brains, it is wort nothing.—*Pun.*

A NEW VIEW OF MATRIMONY.—A lady meeting with a girl who had lately left her service, inquired, "Well, Mary, where do you live now?" "Please, ma'am, I don't live now," replied the girl, "I am married."

"You've destroyed my peace of mind, Betsy," said a desponding lover to a truant lass. "It can't do you much harm, John, for 'twas an amazing small piece you had, any way," was the quick reply.

AN ANSWER WILL OBLIGE.—As the Great Western and the Metropolitan Railways have been so many months running under London, does not the stoppage show that they have at last come to an understanding.—*Pun.*

"DID I understand you to call me a puppy, sir?" "Yes, sir, I called you a puppy." "Lucky for you, sir! The insult is too small to notice; but had you called me a dog, sir—an old dog—I would have knocked you down."

THERE is to be a new company started with the object of assisting the poor to as much money as possible. Their name is excellent security; they call themselves, the Mendacity Society, Limited Liability.—*Pun.*

FIVE OUTS AND ONE IN.—A poor Yankee, on being asked what was the nature of his distress, replied, "that he had five outs and one in;" to wit, out of money, and out of clothes; out at the heels, and out at the toes; out of credit, and in debt.

A PLEA FOR PRUSSIAN POLICY.—The best apology that can be made for the King of Prussia's conduct touching the Polish question is, that he must be puzzled how to act, because his position in respect to it is peculiarly Posen.—*Pun.*

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE POLICEMAN.—After all the talk about the increase of crime, how much less of that have we to trouble us than the ancient Greeks had? Diogenes went about with a lantern to discover an honest man; whereas X employs his bull's eye to detect a thief.

COCKNEY SPORT EXTRAORDINARY.—A well-known sporting character, residing at Putney, being unable to reach the moors this season, and having lost his gun, has lately amused himself by bringing down several brace of grouse by means of the Brompton omnibus.—*Pun.*

WHILE walking with a friend, a gentleman accidentally stepped upon a lady's trailing dress. She turned with a frowning look and strong expression of anger. With his usual urbanity, he replied, "I am sorry, madam, very sorry indeed; but, really, I didn't know that I was within a quarter of a mile of you."

A PARDONABLE MISTAKE.—A capital story is just now going the rounds, of a certain noble lord, whose peculiar style of dress and unpretending appearance are constantly bringing him into awkward situations. The noble lord in question is a very well known member of the Upper House. He is invariably attired in a "tail coat," black continuations, white cotton socks, and low shoes, called, I believe, "pumps." His whole appearance, therefore, is strongly indicative of a waiter or valet out of place. Having occasion the other day to call on the Marquis of S—, in Arlington Street,

Lord R— was informed by the hall porter that his lordship was not at home. "That is odd," replied Lord R—, "as I had an appointment with him." "Well," rejoined the man in livery, "it ain't so odd when I tell you that his lordship gave the situation away two hours ago." Lord R— at once appreciated the position of affairs, and was turning on his heel with a smile on his lip, when the porter said, in a semi-confidential, semi-condescending tone: "If you're going past the Plough (a well-known 'public' in the neighbourhood), would you mind telling them to send a pot of half-and-half?" Lord R— expressed his willingness to discharge his commission, and as he passed the Plough, he directed that a pot of half-and-half should be left at No. —, Arlington Street, with Lord R—'s compliments.

FASHION.—Dress for Ladies Visiting the Moors.—Powder and shot silk. Married ladies will of course get their husbands to see to the charge. Percussion caps are only suitable for matrons. As a harmless initiation into the use of firearms, the prettiest girls should practice shooting glances through double-barrelled opera-glasses.—*Pun.*

A CONSIDERATION.

"You ought to marry."
"Never."
"I know a good girl for you."
"Let me alone."
"But, perhaps, you—pshaw!—you don't know her, she is young."
"Then she is sly."
"Beautiful."
"The more dangerous."
"Of good family."
"Then she is proud."
"Tender-hearted."
"Then she is jealous."
"She has talents."
"To kill me."
"And one hundred thousand pounds."
"I will take her!"

YACHTING.—"Is it more expensive to keep oneself on board ship than on land?" asks a would-be nautical correspondent. Our answer will put the matter in a nautifus shell. If you want to be economical, stop on shore; for it is a matter of great difficulty even to keep your legs for a moment at sea.—*Pun.*

A CALIFORNIA STORY.

We copy the following California story, which inculcates a subtle warning against profanity:

In the northern part of this State is a Yuba River. Across it some individual built a bridge; and on the banks somebody built three or four houses. The inhabitants called the place Yuba Dam. Three bars were erected, and the 'town' increased rapidly. About noon, one cool day, a traveller passed this flourishing locality, and seeing a long-legged specimen of humanity in a red shirt smoking before one of the bars, thus addressed him:

"Hello!"
"Hello!" replied the shirt, with vigour, removing his pipe from his mouth.
"What place is this?" demanded the traveller, whose name was Thompson.
"The answer of the shirt was unexpected:
"Yuba Dam!"

There was fifty yards between them. Mr. Thompson thought he had been mistaken, and repeated the question.

"Yuba Dam," replied the stranger, cheerfully.
"What place is this?" roared Mr. Thompson.
"Yu-ba Dam!" said the shirt, elevating his voice.
"Lookee here!" yelled Thompson; "I asked you politely what place this is—why don't you answer?"
The stranger became excited. He rose and replied with the voice of an 80-pounder:

"Yu-ba-Dam! Do you hear that?"
In a minute Thompson, burning with the wrath of the righteous, jumped off his horse and advanced on the stranger with an expression not to be mistaken. The shirt arose and assumed a posture of offence and defence.

Arrived within a yard of him, Thompson said:
"I ask you for the last time. What place is this?"
Putting his hands to his mouth, his opponent roared:
"Yu-ba-Dam!"

The next minute they were at it. First Thompson was down; then the shirt; and then it was a dog-fall—that is, both were down. They rolled about, kicking up a tremendous dust. They squirmed about so energetically that you'd have thought they had a dozen legs instead of four. It looked like a prize-fight between two pugilistic centipedes. Finally they both rolled off the bank and into the river. The water cooled them. They went down together, but came up separate, and put out for the shore. Both reached it about the same time, and Thompson scrambled up the bank, mounted the war-like steed, and made tracks, leaving his foe.

Having left the business portion of the town—that

is to say, the corner where the three bars were kept—he struck a house in the suburbs, before which a little girl of about four years of age was playing.

"What place is this?" he asked.
The little girl, frightened at the drowned rat figure which the stranger cut, streaked it for the house. Having reached the door, she stopped, turned, and squealed.

"Oo-bee Dam!"
"Good Heaven!" said Thompson, digging his heels between his horse's ribs—"Good Heavens! let me get out of this horrid place, where not only the men but the very babes and sucklings swear at inoffensive travellers!"

TIT FOR TAT.

Party outside Horse: "I say, my man, is this my best way to Puddington?"

Party on Stone-heap (not meaning any impertinence): "Where be 'e comin' fro, sir?"

Party outside Horse: "What's that to you? Is this my best way?"

Party on Stone-heap (severely): "No, sir, 'tis nothin' to me where you be comin' fro, nor where you be gon' to. Good mornin'!" [Resumes stone-cracking.]—*Pun.*

NEW RENDERING OF AN OLD QUESTION.—Many of our public conveyances are full of draughts, owing to broken panes of glass and bad-fitting windows. Sir Richard Mayne it was, we believe, who said that this fact could not be denied, but that it was no good making a row about it, because *De gustis bus non disputandum*. Go along, Sir Richard; or, as we ought to say, just to keep up our latinity, Sir Dick ago!—*Pun.*

"WEALTH breeds care," says the proverb, and it is said that during a recent fire at the East-end, when numbers of terrified people were hastily carrying away their furniture for safety, one poor woman calmly stepped out of one of the houses in danger, and in a satisfied tone of voice exclaimed: "Well, thank God, I've nothing to remove!"

MORE MEN OF BUSINESS.

"Every man hath business . . . such as it is."—*Hamlet*.
"I'm not a man of business, and I was afraid I never should be. I know pretty well what I earn, I've a rough guess at what I owe, and if you add the two there's my annual income, and about once in three years the governor settles with people who bother, so that system works very well. But the dear old governor is always telling me to be a man of business, which he says is 'the only way to be prosperous and respected.'"

Do you know, I think I'll try? It can't be such difficult work. Look at the men of business who direct railways. There can't be greater business swells than those, can there, now? Well, at the Great Western meeting, Mr. Adams says that that company made an agreement with the Undergroundings to lay out £28,000 a-year with them. But the men of business forgot to sign the paper, though they began spending the tin. Then they found out that the affair wouldn't suit them, so the respected men of business repudiate the honourable agreement, and pitch over the Undergroundings. Upon my honour, I'm quite equal to being a prosperous and respected man of business in this fashion, and I shall tell the governor so. I like this free and easy way of going on.

"LIONEL RATTLECASH."
—*Pun.*

MY ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA.

Considerable curiosity has been expressed with regard to the means by which I escaped from Siberia; and as my experience may be of service to others, I do not hesitate to place all the facts before the public.

Born of poor but corpuient parents, I was distinguished, even from childhood's days, as one of the quietest people breathing, nor was this reputation forfeited in after life.

The circumstances connected with my escape from Siberia are as follows:—My sympathy with the cause of Poland was ardent, but I had always a strong conviction that one of the minor duties of an Englishman was to attend to his own business. Mine was grocery.

It so happened that my Polish sympathies became tolerably well known, and that an opportunity offered itself of displaying them in a practical manner. A proposal was made to organize an English legion for the purpose of fighting in the cause of Poland, chiefly on the ground, not of any real acquaintance with the facts and difficulties of the Polish question, but on that of an occurrence exclusively mentioned by the poet Campbell, viz., that "Freedom shrieked when Kosciuszko fell." As soon as I heard of the intended legion I thought of joining its ranks.

I remembered the brilliant success which had attended a similar enterprise, inaugurated under the same auspices, in aid of Garibaldi. It is notorious that the English volunteers covered themselves with glory; that their conduct, both in the camp and on the field of battle, was an honour to their country and race; that their officers were noble and accomplished gentlemen,

who never drank or dined; that not the slightest suspicion of corruption was ever entertained; that the funds raised in England were spent prudently, wisely, and above all, honestly; and that when the Englishmen returned they were in a comfortable condition, and completely satisfied with all their leaders, and with the home committee.

Accordingly, remembering this, I was glad to find that some of the honourable and disinterested men who served in Italy, were ready to lead Young England to Poland. It is certainly a long way off; but we have no scope, of course, for enthusiastic exertion in England. There are no philanthropic enterprises worth mentioning. To free the Poles is, of course, our immediate duty; we can afterwards assist the Circassians; and, ultimately, perhaps, when the whole world is free and happy, we shall be justified in attending a little—just a little—to our own affairs. Nevertheless, I did not go to Poland; in point of fact, I never left St. Mary Axe.

And it is entirely to this circumstance that I attribute my escaping Siberia. I should certainly have been sent there had I shared the fortunes of an English legion.

My teas are excellent, and I shall be glad if anyone will favour me with a call. My name is probably known to many of your readers. JOHN SMITH.

—Fus.

MUSICAL ANECDOTE.—A Highland piper, having a scholar to teach, disdained to crack his brains with the names of semibreves, minims, crotchets, and quavers. "Donald," said he, "tak' yer pipes, lad, and gie us a blast. So, vera weel blawn, indeed; but what's a sound, Donald, without sense; you may blaw for ever without making a tune o' it, if I dinna tell you how the queer things on the paper maun help you. You see that big fellow, wi' a round open face (pointing to a semibreve between two lines of a bar), he moves slowly from that line to this, while ye bent ane with your fist and gie a long blast; if, now, ye put a leg to him ye make twa o' him, and he'll move twice as fast; and if ye black his face, he'll run four times faster than the fellow wi' the white face; but if, after blacking his face, ye'll bend his knee, or tie his leg, he'll hop eight times faster than the white-faced chap I showed you first. Now, whenever you blaw your pipes, Donald, remember this—that the tighter these fellows' legs are tied, the faster they'll run, and the quicker they're sure to dance."

CHINESE ANECDOTE.

A man who was accustomed to deal in marvels, told a country cousin of his that he had three great curiosities in his possession—an ox that could travel five hundred miles a day—a cock that tells the hour of the night, and a dog that could read in a superior manner.

"These are extraordinary things indeed; I must call upon you and beg a sight of them!" said the cousin.

The liar returned home and told his wife what had happened, saying that he had got into a scrape, and knew not how to get out.

"Oh, never mind," replied she, "I can manage it."

The next day the countryman called in, and, inquiring after his cousin, was told that he had gone to Peking.

"When is he expected back?"

"In seven or eight days."

"How can he return so soon?"

"He has gone upon an ox."

"Apropos of that, I am told you have a cock that marks the hour." A cock just then happened to crow.

"Yes, that is he; he not only tells the hour of the night, but reports when a stranger comes."

"Then your dog that reads books—might I beg to see him?"

"Why, to speak the truth, as our circumstances are but narrow, we have sent the dog out to keep school!"

READING ONE'S OWN OBITUARY.—In the days of old Mycall, the publisher of the *Newburyport Herald* (a journal still alive and flourishing), the sheriff of old Essex, Philip Bagley, had been asked several times to pay up his arrears of subscription. At last, one day he told Mycall that he would certainly hand over the next morning as sure as he lived. "If you don't get your money to-morrow, you may be sure I am dead," said he. The morrow came and passed, but no money. Judge of the sheriff's feelings, when, on the morning of the day after, he opened his *Herald*, and saw announced the lamented decease of Philip Bagley, Esq., High Sheriff of the county of Essex; with an obituary notice attached, giving the deceased credit for a good many excellent traits of character, but adding that he had one fault very much to be deplored—he was not punctual in paying the printer. Bagley, without waiting for his breakfast, started for the *Herald* office. On the way it struck him as singular that none of the many friends and acquaintances he met seemed to be surprised to see him. They must have read their morning paper. Was it possible they cared so little about him as to have forgotten already that he was no more? Full of perturbation, he entered the printing office, to deny that he was dead in *propria persona*.

"Why, sheriff," exclaimed the facetious editor, "I thought you were defunct." "Defunct!" exclaimed the sheriff, "what put that idea into your head?" "Why, you yourself!" said Mycall. "Did you not tell me—" "Oh! ah! yes!" stammered out the sheriff. "Well, there's your money. And now contradict the report in the next paper, if you please." "That's not necessary, friend Bagley," said the old joker; "It was only printed in your copy!" The good sheriff lived many years after this "sell," and to the day of his real death always took good care to pay the printer.

STATISTICS.

THE BOARD OF TRADE RETURNS for June have been issued. They show an expansion of the export trade to an extent that is really remarkable, considering the American war and the state of the cotton manufacture. The month's exports of home produce and manufactures are stated at £11,271,527, being £1,502,086 more than in the same month of last year, and £908,634 more than in 1861, and those for the six months at £62,014,197 being £4,699,518 more than in 1862, and £1,876,772 more than in that comparatively undisturbed year 1861. The increase is spread over nearly all the leading articles, and cotton manufactures share largely in it.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS.—Of the 121,214 emigrants from the United Kingdom, in the year 1862, 70,522 were males, and 50,992 females; 87,382 were adults, and 18,238 children under twelve years of age—3,510 of them not a year old; the age of the residue of the emigrants was not recorded; 23,579 of the adults were married, and 63,803 single; of the married there were above 2,000 more women than men, 12,854 of the women were wives, and 24,240 were single; but the single men were more in number—namely, 39,563. Among the men there were 1,667 gentlemen, professional men, and merchants; 4,127 farmers; 2,438 agricultural labourers, gardeners, and carters; 1,720 miners and quarrymen, 765 seamen, 938 carpenters, 568 spinners and weavers, 499 bricklayers, 406 tailors, 376 painters, glaziers, and plumbers; 300 shoemakers, 750 clerks, and 120 domestic servants. Of the women 8,985 are classed as domestic and farm servants, nurses &c., 378 as dressmakers and needlewomen, and 179 as gentlewomen and governesses.

THE TIDE OF THOUGHT.

There is a tide of thought which brings

Both sorrow and regret,

But there's a spring that will not dry,—

A star that ne'er will set.

There lurks a worm within the flower,

Its beauties to destroy;

A cloud o'ercasts the troubled soul,

And mars its earthly joy.

Yet those who humbly trust in Him

Who rules the stars above,

In spite of all shall reunite,

In bonds of endless love.

Thus, dearest, through life's viewless track,

Though we were doomed to part,

Fond thoughts of thee would ever shed

A lightness o'er my heart.

Thou little know'st the depth of love

Which I have nursed for years,

How long my heart has yearned to tell

Its treasured hopes and fears.

And though perchance my early dreams

Are fled beyond recall,

To know that I possess thy love,

Will compensate for all.

J. A.

GEMS.

MEX may give good advice, but they cannot give the sense to make a right use of it.

The mind is like a trunk; if well packed it will hold almost everything; if ill-packed, next to nothing.

SEARCH thine own heart! Within thee there is a fountain of good, which will always flow, provided thou diggest for it.

CHINESE SAYING.—Trust not the flatterer. In thy days of sunshine he will give the pounds of butter—and in thy hour of need deny thee a crumb of bread!

OUR sins, like our shadows, when our day is in its glory scarce appear; towards our evening how great and monstrous!

If you would relish your food, labour for it; if you would enjoy your raiment, pay for it before you wear it; if you would sleep soundly, take a clear conscience to bed with you.

He that boasts of his ancestors, confesses that he has no virtues of his own. No person ever lived for our

honour; nor ought that to be reputed ours, which was long before we had a being; for what advantage can it be to a blind man to know that his parents had good eyes? does he see one whit the better?

It is a practice entirely too prevalent in this queer world that we inhabit, to condemn the performances of others, when we know that the task could not be better accomplished by ourselves.

WHAT an argument in favour of social connections is the observation, that by communicating our grief we have less, and by communicating our pleasures we have more.

MEN's thoughts are much according to their inclination; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions; but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed.

To do an ill action is base; to do a good one, which involves you in no danger, is nothing more than common; but it is the property of a truly good man, to do great and good things, though he risk everything by it.

TIME wears slippers of list, and his tread is noiseless. The days come softly dawning one after another; they creep in at the windows; their fresh morning air is grateful to the lips that part for it; their music is sweet to ears that listen to it; until, before we know it, a whole life of days has possession of the citadel, and time has taken us for his own.

ADA CLARE, who says a good many sensible things, remarks that "as long as men prefer a small foot in a woman to a kind heart, and an hour-glass waist to a tender soul, women will continue to torture their feet and squeeze their ribs out of place, and their hearts and souls will remain what they too often are, shallow pools, watered and dried up or filled with stagnant and bitter waters."

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE sum paid in exchange for postage-stamps amounted last year, in London alone to nearly £60,000.

THE *New York Times* says that the proclamation of the Mexican empire shows that an affiliation between Napoleon and the South is absolutely certain.

SIR JAMES P. WILDE, one of the Barons of the Exchequer, will succeed Sir Crosswell Cresswell as Chief Judge in Ordinary of the Court of Probate and Divorce.

THERE has been a very considerable improvement in the prospects of the large seafaring population engaged off the north-eastern coast in herring fishing. The "takes" have been very good.

THE Emperor is expected to visit the Camp of Châlons as usual at this season of the year. The camp at present contains 45,000 men, but on the 15th that number will be increased to 53,000.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS OF WALES has presented Mrs. Crossley, the wife of the Mayor of Halifax, with a diamond bracelet, as a slight *souvenir* of the Prince of Wales's very agreeable visit to Halifax.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE will open for the season on the 12th of next month, when a new comedy by Mr. Falconer, entitled "Nature's above Art," will be produced.

FOUR kings (Saxony, Wurtemberg, Bavaria, and Hanover) and several minor princes have responded favourably to the invitation of the Emperor of Austria. Prussia, on the contrary, has refused to entertain it in the most absolute manner.

THE inhabitants of Ostend, and of that part of Flanders in which it is situated, some time since determined to erect a palace in the city for the King and royal family, and were moved to do this to show their gratitude to the venerable King for his admirable government.

SIR RICHARD GRAVES MACDONNELL, C.B., late Chief Governor of South Australia, has recently delivered a lecture on Australia. "What it is, and what it may be," which in a very little compass embraces a large amount of information not easily accessible elsewhere.

A PARTY of upwards of fifty of the Farquharson Highlanders, under the command of their gallant chieftain, Colonel Farquharson of Invercauld, proceeded to Ballater, as a guard of honour to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales during their stay in the Highlands.

THE report of the Science and Art Department for the past year states that 2,543 persons have been under instruction in science classes taught by certified masters, and, besides, about 870 students at Glasgow and Manchester, taught by uncertificated masters, have been examined by the department.

THE long vacation, properly so called, commenced on the 10th instant, and will continue as prescribed by the Uniformity Acts until the 24th of October next. During that period all pleadings and proceedings in actions commenced and pending can neither be dated, filed, nor delivered.

NOTICE

THE SHAKESPEARE GALLERY.

The public are respectfully informed that every purchaser of No. 7 of THE LONDON READER was entitled to receive (Gratia) No. 1 of a Series of Engravings illustrative of Scenes in the most popular Plays of Shakespeare.

The issue of No. 2 of THE SHAKESPEARE GALLERY will be duly announced in THE LONDON READER.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

O. U. X.—*Circe*.

R. T. GUNTOX.—Received, and reserved for consideration.

C. SUMMERS.—We have no reason to suppose it other than a genuine concern.

LILY MORROW.—To your first query: The young gentleman has probably changed his mind, and you should follow the example. To the second question: Yes.

CHARLOTTE MANSARD.—Kindness is stronger than anger. Try the effect of the former. You can but show resentment when you are sure it is deserved.

W. R.—Take the prescription to a dispensing chemist, and get it compounded. You play with edged tools when you pry into professional mysteries.

DOUBTFUL.—The claim must rest entirely upon the regulations established by the trustees of the endowment, and those you do not apprise us of, how then can we advise you while ignorant of the facts.

A SUBSCRIBER FROM THE FIRST.—To the first question, 26; to the second, 4, and occasionally 5; to the third, 10. Rowland, of Hutton Garden, can supply dyes for colouring the hair of any hue.

A CONSTANT READER.—1. Keep your head cool by temperance, eat no heavy suppers, and avoid excitement, and you may obtain a quiet sleep. 2. There are lotions for the cure of eruptions on the face, but the application of such should be directed by a medical man.

LILLY S. would gladly answer the advertisement of "H. S. W." (No. 14). He is seventeen, pretty and ladylike, and would, above all things, like to be a soldier's wife.

CHARLES MURRAY writes:—"I am eighteen years of age, 6 ft. 6 in. high, and they do say good-looking, and should feel great pleasure in corresponding with a young lady of about eighteen that has a true and a loving heart."

T. N.—The Court of Chancery is a faithless deep. You want a list of the names of all the persons whose property has been lapsed. Children wish for the moon. Your request is about as rational.

W. R.—Lavender Scent-bag: Take of lavender flowers free from stalk, half a pound; dried thyme and mint, of each half an ounce; ground clove and carraways, of each a quarter of an ounce; common salt, dried, one ounce; mix the whole well together, and put the product into silk or cambric bags. In this way it will perfume the drawers and linen very nicely.

T. S.—To make one hundred gallons of bitter ale, use nine bushels of malt, or ten, if strength is desired; from twenty-three to twenty-seven pounds of Kentish hops, according to the required degree of bitterness; three pounds of camomile flowers, stewed in a jar and strained. Put the camomile flowers and hops in at the same time. Boil the malt and water till the liquor begins to fine itself, and that is the time to add the hops and flowers.

R. H.—Logwood and green copperas are commonly used to make a black dye, but the colour is improved by first boiling the article in a decoction of galls and alder bark. If previously dyed blue or brown, by means of walnut-peels, it will be still better.

H. R.—The wages of seamen in the merchant navy are reckoned by the month; but to the Australian ports, since the gold discoveries, it has become common to bargain for the run out and home.

R. R.—A person wishing to be married by banns must have resided in the parish in which the banns were published, fourteen clear days before the performance of the ceremony.

I. E.—Rashfulness is more a weakness than a habit. It is chiefly caused by parents foolishly excluding their children from society, checking their natural gaiety, and endeavouring to impose on them an unnatural artificiality. As regards your case we should advise you to become a member of a literary society, and so have an opportunity of meeting young men *au fait* in the usages and affairs of the world.

R. R.—A fortune-hunter is one of the most despicable of men. He treats marriage just like a game at cards or a throw of the dice. It is fortunate for society that in this kind of gambling the losers are the vast majority of the blackguard fraternity. You ask us for our opinion. We give it. The man who would marry a woman solely for her money, would cheat a friend, pick a pocket in a crowd, break open a cash-box, embezzle, commit forgery—in fact, be capable of anything dishonest. The man that could cheat a confiding woman, would not hesitate to do anything bad or monstrous.

M. I. J. is engaged to marry a young lady, and has every reason to believe she loves him dearly; but she frequently gives him much pain by staring at other gentlemen. A vulgar practice, very much on the increase, we are sorry to observe. It is highly indelicate, but is not always indicative of a vulgar mind, although it too frequently is. It is a habit, and, like all bad habits, ought to be eradicated. The men stared at generally think the bold, staring girls no better than they should be. A giggling man is bad enough, but a giggling girl shocks every sense of feminine propriety.

W. G. S. has a sweetheart, who, in her letters and manner, is cold and constrained. His friend, on the contrary, corresponds with a girl who is warm and frank. He requests to know which we think the most likely to be true and tender in affection? We should say both would; but, after marriage, the cold sweetheart would probably be the most loving wife. Matrimony thaws the frostiest of hearts. Your frank, "true lover"—like girls, not having much foe to thaw, are not so impraisable in this respect. A good deal of the sentiment evaporates during courtship. The cold, haughty girl, on the contrary, when metamorphosed into a wife, steps into quite a

new existence—her dormant susceptibilities are roused into action, and she becomes the most passionately-attached spouse that the most anxious husband could desire. The mode in which the feelings find expression rests with the temperaments; and, as a woman's education is not completed until she has been married and had a child, her behaviour and manner during courtship is not to be taken as an infallible index to her future character and disposition.

A. L.—An oath is an invocation to the Deity, to testify to the truth or falsehood of a statement, to witness a pledge, a promise, or an engagement. Its solemnity is only exalted by its awful responsibility. A promise or declaration not ratified by oath, is a matter that concerns the individual conscience. An oath, on the contrary, appeals to, and affects the universal conscience.

G. R.—The Royal Asylum of St. Ann's Society, for orphans, or the children of parents who have seen better days, is in Streatham, Surrey, on the road to Croydon, about five and a half miles from Whitehall. It was founded in 1769. Application for admission is to be made to the committee.

S. E. S.—A woman who has been living apart from her husband for any number of years—even fifty—would not be justified in marrying again, when she was morally certain her husband was living. The judges, in passing sentences after convictions for bigamy, take the minutest circumstances into consideration. If there are no urgent extenuating circumstances, the punishments are invariably severe.

K. N.—To preserve flowers throughout the winter: Pluck them when half-blown, and put them in a close-covered earthen vessel, dipping them, with the stalks downwards, in equal quantities of vinegar and water, mixed, sprinkled with a small portion of bay-salt. The vessel must be kept closed, in a warm place; and, on the coldest day in winter, if the flowers are taken out, washed in pure water, and held before a gentle fire, they will open as if in their usual bloom.

R. O.—In heraldry, the supporters are exterior ornaments, placed at the sides of the escutcheon, to support it. They are chiefly animals and birds. The royal supporters, since King James I. have been a lion and unicorn. But the sovereigns of England, from Edward III. to Queen Elizabeth, bore their supporters as follows:

Edward III.	.....	A Lion and Eagle.
Richard II.	.....	Not known.
Henry IV.	.....	White Antelope and White Swan.
Henry V.	.....	Lion and Antelope.
Henry VI.	.....	The same.
Edward IV.	.....	Lion and Black Bull.
Edward V.	.....	Yellow Lion and White Lion.
Richard III.	.....	Yellow Lion and White Boar.
Henry VII.	.....	Lion and Red Dragon.
Henry VIII.	.....	Lion and Silver Greyhound.
Mary	.....	Lion and Greyhound.
Elizabeth	.....	The same.

R. D. R.—Hatchments should correspond to the rank, sex, position, &c., of the deceased. When a bachelor dies, his arms and crest are painted single or quartered, but never impaled; the ground of the hatchment under the shield is all black. When a maiden dies, her arms (but no crest) must be placed in a lezege, and may be single or quartered, with the ground under the escutcheon all black. When a married man dies, his arms are impaled with his wife's, the ground of the hatchment under the shield is black, his wife's is white; the black signifies the husband to be dead, and the white side that the wife is living. When a married woman dies, her arms are impaled with her husband's (but no crest), the ground of the hatchment under her side of the shield is black, that of the husband white, to denote that he is living. When a widower dies, his arms are impaled with those of his deceased wife, with his crest, the ground of the hatchment to be all black; the same in the case of a widow, with the exception of the crest. When the man or woman is the last of a family, the death's-head supplies the place of a crest. This is to signify that death has conquered all.

E.—You wish to send a gentleman a flower which shall, by its significance, tell him that you think he is presumptuous. Send him a snapdragon, which, you well know, when its sides are pressed, opens like a gaping mouth. On removing the pressure, the lips of the corolla snap together—and hence its name. The French call it *l'âne-saut*. It has been extensively introduced into our gardens, but like presumptuous people, it becomes troublesome by spreading too far, and is therefore eradicated. In the language of flowers, the yellow pink is said to be expressive of disdain. But why be too hard upon the unfortunate young man? No woman ought to treat the love of an honest man with contempt. The feeling is too sacred to be derided.

H. asks us how he shall woo a lady his superior in social position, of whom he has become desperately enamoured. He might as well have asked how he should climb to the moon. The very spirit of courtship is its mystery, and that mystery is only revealed to those who are duly inspired. If he has caught none of the fire, he is not sufficiently magnetized for the undertaking. But, seriously, if he wishes to succeed, he must first improve his worldly condition. Ladies' hearts, in these matter-of-fact days, are not won by feats of knight-errantry, but feats of common sense, a gentlemanly demeanor, and inflexible moral rectitude.

E. M. says he loves two young ladies, and the only reason he can assign is, that one is so like the other, that he can scarcely tell the difference. Our impression is, that he is not in love with either. Real love is not based on doubt, nor does it hesitate to make a choice. Like the race-horse, it strives to reach the winning-post at a swifter speed than a gallop. It disdains to shamble and shuffle like a heavy cart-horse. E. M. is charmed, but not smitten. Mere fascination is not a sentiment. He must select one, and that speedily, or he will lose both chances. The only hint we will give him is this: the most accomplished girl does not always make the most accomplished wife.

S.—The girl loves another, does she? Well, how can you help that? You might as well quarrel with the stars for not shining when you are in a humour to be meditative and poetical. Resign yourself to your destiny; be prudent, industrious, honourable and gentlemanly, and the girl who will love will soon make her appearance.

R. M.—Dislike at first sight is quite as possible as love at first sight. Some temperaments repel—others attract. A nervous, bilious person will not be much disposed to like a red-haired, mangy, bilious person—and the reverse. Their instincts will not fraternize, hence the sudden repugnance. But in this matter, the most qualities are brought to bear. Vice taints the whole constitution—it affects the manner, the

voice, the tone—indeed, it peeps out in a thousand different ways. An honourable man brought into contact with this diseased moral organization, feels that is so; his inner man consequently draws back from that of the other, and doubt and mistrust take possession of him. It is the same with frank natures having minds similarly disposed. They meet, and there is at once a mutual attraction. Their natures harmonize; but where there is no harmony, there must be repulsion.

O. C.—The lady being twenty-two and you only nineteen, her father only acts wisely in prohibiting the courtship. It would be monstrous as well as ridiculous to allow a boy like you to wed a full-grown woman.

K. C.—The marriage costume of a gentleman is what is called full dress—namely, black body-coat, black trousers, white waistcoat, and white neckcloth. Boots and a clean shirt are indispensable.

E. M.—Fox's cream for the hair is a stimulant as well as beautifier. It is made as follows: Put into a jar two ounces each of marrow pomatum and almond-oil, melt gently by the fire, and while cooling, stir in two drachms of oil of jessamine or bergamot.

Y. C.—Leather may be dyed red, by washing the skins, and laying them two hours in galls, then wringing them out, and dipping them in a liquor made with privet berries, alum and verdigris in water; and, lastly, in a dye made of Brazilian wood, boiled with ley.

W. P.—The greatest length of street in London is from east to west, and that is about fourteen miles; from north to south it is about thirteen miles. The solid mass may be estimated as about seven miles by four; so that the ground covered with houses is not less than twenty square miles. The number of houses is about 300,000, and the number of streets, alleys, &c., upwards of 10,000.

O. T.—When you ask which is the most beautiful passage in Shakespeare's productions, you simply ask an impossibility. Beauty is a matter of taste, and Shakespeare suited every taste. His descriptions of his heroines are matchless in beauty; so are those of his quiet scenes of nature. All is beautiful, and amid such abundance, it is only the fastidious that can pick and choose.

R.—The use of cosmetics is highly prejudicial to the health, because they interrupt the natural perspiration. When cosmetics were the rage in fashionable society, it was no unusual circumstance for ladies to expire suddenly in ball-rooms, or die of bilious fevers—all which casualties were attributed by the medical fraternity to the prevailing rage for plastering the skin with every species of villainous ingredient that would produce a temporary whiteness.

T. L. S.—The difference, as regards doctrine and discipline, between the Roman and Greek churches, is not very great. The latter acknowledges the spiritual supremacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, the former of the Pope. The separation occurred in the early ages of Christianity; and for the particulars we must refer you to Neander's "Church History." The Mohammedans are deists, who have accepted Mahomet as mediator and mediator of the interpreter of the Divine law. They believe in a state of future rewards and punishments.

J. W.—We only know of one way by which a picture may be cleaned without injury; and that is, by taking it out of its frame, and laying over it a clean towel, quite wetted, and sprinkling it from time to time with clear soft water. It should remain wet for two or three days, then take the cloth off and renew it with a fresh wet one, after wiping the picture with a clean, wet sponge. Repeat the process until all the dirt is soaked out, then wash the picture well with a soft sponge, and after it is quite dry, rub it over with some clear nut or linseed oil.

R. M.—The Royal Marriages Act, passed in the reigns of Geo. II. and Geo. III., declares marriages among the members of the royal family illegal, unless the previous and formal consent of the sovereign has been obtained. In the case of the sovereign, whether male or female, there is, of course, no prohibition, for his or her will is absolute. It would be ridiculous for a king or queen to have to obtain his or her own royal assent to do what he or she might royally please. The Queen could have married a subject, but she consulted her affection and the traditional policy of her house, and of all the monarchies of Europe, by wedding a foreigner.

J. E. Y.—When a lady and gentleman who are only slightly acquainted meet in public, the etiquette is, that the lady should recognize the gentleman first, so as to give him the privilege of returning her salute, or stopping to address her, just as the hasty circumstance of the moment would allow him to judge. This etiquette is preferable to the old style, because it enables a lady to choose those of the other sex whom she may deem worthy of her acquaintance, and also to keep at a distance those whom she dislikes, or who are not entitled to the familiarity of a friendly recognition.

J. M. J.—The first English duke was the Black Prince whom his father created in Parliament Duke of Cornwall. This was on the 17th of March, 1337. The first English marquis was Robert Vere, Earl of Oxford, who by Richard II. was created Marquis of Dublin. The title of earl came from the Saxons, but under their régime they performed the duties of modern sheriffs. The first earl, after the Norman Conquest, that was invested by girding of the sword, was Hugh de Puzos, Bishop of Durham, who by Richard I. was created Earl of Northumberland. The first viscount was John Lord Beaumont, created such by letters patent, granted by Henry VI. in 1440. The title of baron was instituted by Richard I. in 1133; the first person instituted was John Beauchamp, Baron of Kidderminster.

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